

Nameless Flower OC Hakuouki Fanfiction  
by Goddess Ganny

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Summary: "Just because I am a woman doesn't mean I have to be a meiko, and get laid by. To have children is not my closest priority! I don't want to get married to a man I don't love, for this feelings never reached me yet. For now, I want to be the best samurai, and in order to do that, I must escape and disguise myself as a man."

## 1. 00x STORY BASE

\*\*\_NAMELESS FLOWER\_\*\*

\*\*A Hakuouki Series Fanfiction\*\*

\*\*GENRE: \*\*Romance, Violence, Mature

\*\*RATED: \*\*M (Gore, the language, and the romance)

\*\*THEME SONG: \*\*Tsuki No Uta (The Sixth Day) - Gackt

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Main Characters:<strong>

OC 01

OC 02

Hijikata Toshizou

Chizuru Yukimura

Chikage Kazama

Saito Hajime

Okita Souji

Heisuke Toudou

Harada Sanosuke

Shinpachi Nagakura

Susumu Yamazaki

Shiranui Kyou

Amagiri Kyuuju

Osen-hime

Kaoru Nagumo

Kimigiku

Sannan Keisuke

Kondou Isami

Gensaburou Inoue

\* \* \*

><p><strong>Original Character (OC) 01: <strong>Aka "Raion"  
Shirabuki

\_Description: \_Aka is her real name, but she goes by the nick "Raion" because she was noted to be much of a lion with a brave heart; a western demon with one horn at the middle and is often disguised as a guy for protection, blending with humans even though she knows that she might be hated by them. Aka has demonic red hair and a pair of crimson red eyes, which makes her look more of an omen, but her true beauty is hidden behind a short blond wig (appearing much of a young guy regardless the face). Her face is said to be one of the prettiest amongst the few female demons or \_oni\_ that survived after the wars of the worlds, which is why she is skilled with swords, but partially experienced with firearms which is the opposite. Her body is more feminine but she has to disguise so she places binders all over her and would wear male clothes, currently siding with the Shinsengumi. She is a very cheerful person, but much boyish due to the influence, and more of the rebellious and brave types who will not back out, even though she's in the middle of a near "to death" situation, also noted to have strong interest and bonds with humans because she finds them comfortable than the \_oni\_. She is often taken as Chikage Kazama's younger brother whenever she is in disguise, for it has strong resemblance, but she doesn't mind at all since she's in 'good' terms with the oni. She is engaged to Iyori Tenshi, decided by her parents even before birth, which is one of the main reasons why she ran away hiding. She is the sole heir and the 'princess' of their clan.

\*\*Original Character (OC) 02: \*\*Iyori Tenshi

\_Description: \_Iyori is a four horned \_oni\_ and the current leader or 'prince' of the Tenshi clan, the strongest of the Northern demons in

partnership with the Bakumatsu and the Kazama clan (though their leaders aren't much in good terms), working on the researches of the 'elixir' also with Yukimura Koudou before. He has calm, teal blue, icy eyes that resembles much of sadness and strong raven blue hair that appears lengthy and slightly spiky, reaching to his knees, him standing almost six feet and three inches high. He is very picky when it comes to clothing though his voice is often blank or monotone, even at times when he would be surprised (which was one running joke). He is very skilled with firearms and most weapons making him almost a perfectionist, but stresses that he has flaws himself, such as his low sense of direction. He rarely smiles with truancy, often mistaken as serious and a joy killer, less he'd be sarcastic and ready to kill around, resulting from his bad childhood and lost of inspiration, which was his fiancÃ©, Aka Shirabuki. Him and Aka were close friends and had their fate sealed, which was pretty nice for him, since she's the only person whom he notes have understood her aside from Nagumo Kaoru, until she left far away leaving him on the hands of people he doesn't like to be with. He grew up fine but half coldhearted because he never shares his problems, and he has psychological possessive issues when it comes to Aka. After hearing some news that his fiancÃ© had been moving around and hiding at the East, he ventures immediately, stressing that she won't get away from him no matter what she does, because she belongs to him.

\* \* \*

><p><strong>For many years, the oni and the humans lived together in harmony, both in clans and in pride. They were said to maintain the balance between most things which made the peace live longer than their lifespan. It maintained like this, until one oni clan had gone rampage and attacked humans, opposing the rest of the oni and pursuing them that humans are their food and life source, thus the lower class. This wasn't permitted, thus they started breaking and killing each other instead.</strong>

\*\*The oni clan from all sides, the North, South, East and West, were depleting little by little as the results of the war of the worlds along with the humans who thinks that they were the omen of their countries. Ever since the rebellion started, they had diseases and most of them were killed as food, gruesomely slain and fed to the other half â€“ oni people which they call as rasetsu which means mad demons. Therefore, human warriors started to break their treaty and contracts with the oni clans whom they relied on before, killing most through heart stabs after learning that their wounds heal quickly no matter how much they would slash on them.\*\*

\*\*Knowing that the humans themselves have not much defense against the oni, they used the advantage of research conducted by the Bakufu, one group that still seeks peace and revival within the races formed the 'elixir' mostly on the Western area. Yukimura Koudou proposed and started the 'elixir' which was tested on normal humans but some were failed, turning in to rasetsu which made the man feel guilty of what he has done. Even so, knowing that the elixir is the only medicine that can oppose the remaining and depleting oni race, some humans drank it and fend themselves. After this incident, Koudou decided to quit and hide along the shadows, leaving his only daughter, Yukimura Chizuru, alone.\*\*

\*\*Despite the fact that the research was abandoned, the Kazama clan and the Bakumatsu still continued this further to put an end and

tried to find Koudou but with anterior motives, knowing that the two clans had a feud and broken, still problematic since the humans are killing most demons, abusing the power of the elixir which can make them merciless and wild untamed rasetsu. They are still finding a cure for those who still took the elixir, while facing the problem of how the oni race could reproduce again. Along with this is the Tenshi clan who swore alliance ever since; one of the noted clans who worked with humans for ages until they stayed hidden because of the incident, also bonded with the Shirabuki clan who were skilled in swords and finesse but a dying clan after many were killed at the war. The oni only decided of reproducing and mating to multiply, throwing away their feelings and started hunting remaining female oni.\*\*

\*\*On contrary with that, Yukimura Chizuru searches for her father and ends up in the Shinsengumi, known as the Wolves of Mibu because of their merciless and quite martial status around the countries, their names carved as fear inside normal people's heads. The Shinsengumi was one of the humans that Koudou had trusted and worked on, leaving pieces of the prints of research about the rasetsu in their hands, and the other Shinsengumi turned-rasetsu. Chizuru stays there in search for her father and grew attached to the Shinsengumi. They took in another mysterious person who seems helpful going by the name of Raion Shirabuki, mistaken first as Chikage Kazama's brother because of the resemblance (excluding the height), reasoning that "he" was one of Kondou's partners in the research before, but truth is that "he's" simply disguising just to run away from Iyori Tenshi, the 'prince' of the Northern Oni who searched for "him" many times just to take "him" back.\*\*

## 2. 00x CHAPTER 1

\*\*akaxgan\*\* \_says...\_ Finally I can post on fanfiction again, yey! So far I will be posting these chapters c: and somehow I hope I didn't get some of the characters to OOC. I am pretty addicted to Hakuouki and Toki no Kizuna so I made this \*u\* Please take your time reading 3 Reviews and such will be appreciated for further improvement. 3 3

\* \* \*

><p><em>"I don't like this idea."</em>

The wind blows cold and quiet, but her voice beamed most because she was furious. In the middle of the night, the full moon shines partnering with the clouds and the stars that were shining perfect. She contrasted to the quiet feeling, after giving that red glare towards the other demon that she was talking to, shaking her head little, a bit childish to be exact. She stresses it more with her body language, standing firm and prideful, only to have her burning pride sinking down zealous and mentally inside her, hearing of the suggestion.

She cannot even imagine herself being married to a man she doesn't feel like marrying about. "â€œ!" she remained silent again while she frowns, her face turning a bit sober, facing the other remaining oni of her clan while wearing a very lovely kimono, her face matched with any beautiful figure and her poise as such a flower would sway with the wind. Even so she was like this, she cared for the people, and the oni race, but she cannot find herself giving away her feelings

just that easy. "Don't do this to me, please." She added again.

"Aka-hime!" the other elderly Shirabuki said, softening his voice after seeing their princess make that face. She looked so young and innocent, but behind that lays the stained hands after being engaged with war at such an age. "Iyori-sama is someone you knew ever since, and this is what your parents had wanted over. The oni race is depleting and we need to help a lot! we, us, are also dying. The Shirabuki clan is almost dying." He added, also hurt after saying those words which were deem painful. After the war and them being ambushed by most, the Shirabuki oni were left few and forced to run away seeking shelter from the allied Tenshi clan.

Right now, they're even residing inside one of the Tenshi clan's noble houses, which were offered by the princess' fianc  who really took her for his own, possessive over her in any angle. Aka liked him as a friend, but never felt or 'loved' him because there was something off that she could feel. True that they were both demons, but knowing the Shirabuki princess who was much fond of humans, she'd side much on the simpler ones and thought of her feelings, as what she learned from one of her friends. It hurts her that humans were hating people like her but she never gave up thinking that everything would be back in order.

Aka frowns more to that, as her heart sobered. "Are you saying that you're on votes of offering me to Iyori then?" she doesn't want them to nod, but they did, making her gasp inside, almost tearing herself apart but couldn't help the elderly. Because of this, she felt that she was useless and she should think of the clan as the priority, swallowing her pride once more to endure what she decided. "Fine! if this is what you wish." This was her decision, though deep inside, she wasn't really happy.

Aka was alone in the room after some time, the elder oni left her to rest. She sighs and sat down on her futon, saddened because she has to marry immediately. She didn't like this even if it was decided before her birth, and talked over the past ten years, treating him more of a brother instead. For her, the Tenshi prince deserves someone better than her but then she couldn't bring herself to give herself to him yet and she doesn't like the idea foremost. It was highly impossible, and she thought of it selfishly since she cares for herself most of the time, one thing that makes her much of a troublesome oni. It was late night for counts but she didn't mind, not sleeping, her head still feeling flustered with everything that was thrown to her such as the words and the promises.

"!" she thinks in silence, still looking at the moon, her pair of crimson eyes and her long fiery hair shining beautifully like a piece of the red sea. She was noted as one of the prettiest demons that they have saved and the strongest because of her skills when it comes to swords at such a young age the only problem was she's more of a guy. Anyhow, her fianc  accepted her on what she is and who she is before and after, which is also why she is irritated.

She was thinking too hard, she didn't recognize the presence of the other oni who entered quiet, not disturbing her and sitting behind her, crossing his arms over her shoulders. She was shocked with that, seeing the fair hands and strands of raven hair before she faces back careful, being aware of who it was. "Iyori-sama." She says in a

low voice, her tilting her head, the eyes of hers in par with his blue stare and the sadness within was unexplainable, but he wore a soft, true smile, while embracing her more to his hold. "â€œ!" she blushed red to that but didn't budge, still thinking of what the elder had talked for some time. '\_Iyori doesn't really want to let go off me orâ€œ'\_ she was much sad now thinking that her parents really wanted them to be like this.

Iyori blinks to her, caressing her hair with one of his hands and kissing the back of her head quiet before he speaks in his warm voice. "You're not okay." He spoke in blank tone and much of no change. He knew that by the way she reacts and make things, for he had memorized her since then. Seeing her walk away and stay away from him was one thing that hurts him, but never showed. Instead, he would slash on his subjects but told them never to speak about this in public. It was insanity.

"I'm fine. I was just tired." She responded back, touching his hands and taking it away from his grip slowly. She had a blank face too for seconds but she mustered up a small smile.

"â€œ!" he didn't believe in that and sighed. "You're not going to lie on me again, aren't youâ€œ?" he asked, his pale monotonous voice bringing some slight action afterwards, when suddenly she gave up. He didn't blink to it, but continued to look at her, asking the same sick question ever since. "Why can't you love me?"

She really fears of answering that question, and somehow she would feel guilty because of it. Sometimes she heard rumors that Iyori wouldn't even mend well with the other elders because of his temper, though he shows kindness and patience towards her, plus he seems to be listening to her most of the time. She couldn't imagine him being angered and whenever she asks, the other oni would shut up instead and divert the topic, like they couldn't really describe at all. It makes her curious sometimes, but she didn't mind that for now. She wanted to be honest but had the feeling that she should mostly do white lies. The Shirabuki oni begged of her to just agree with the marriage but she is still stuck in the middle of decisions, whether to throw her heart away to a guy she doesn't love so far.

It was strange though â€œ her and the prince were childhood friends and she seems to be the one cooperating with him most of the time, but how come she doesn't feel that kind of 'love' in terms of partnership? She loved him more as a brother like the other oni that she respects but cannot find a way to bring herself to love this man. She feels like it's not time yet; her heart was more of a human than the species that they are. Even so, the prince does understand, but she fidgets whenever she would walk away and think completely that it won't happen sooner.

After a few minutes of silence, she faced back and looked at him who was standing taller. She was far shorter than him, mostly teased as petite because she is a short girl, but then again, the prince didn't mind and liked her, everything of her. While having this in mind, she closes her eyes and then responds back. "I already told you a hundred times, right?" she says, though in a sorry tone. "Sorry, Iyori, if I can't even answer this properly. I'm not ready yet." She added.

He didn't contrast to that for he really fears that she might leave him completely if he continues to force her, so he waits the usual,

but honestly was growing impatient inside him. "I can wait, even a hundred years if I have to." he added, sure, frank and of truancy. His eyes reflected how serious he was, facing her confused eyes which were clouded with a mixture of fear and persistence. He read that well based on his observation. "Why is it, when you look at my eyes, you turn confused?" he asks, changing the topic.

Aka blinks to that, processing in her mind what he is trying to say towards her. She mumbled a bit. '\_Am I that honest to him?' \_then again, this is bad. "Because!" she cannot really think of a proper answer for that. '\_I feel so stupid now.\_' She wanted to avoid the question as well, probably because she doesn't want to talk about it too.

"This won't do." He speaks, making her look. To her surprise, he started to lift her up with his strong hands, her legs hitting part his arm muscles while he gestures well, standing firm and feeling how light she was. He started to walk out of her room and carried her along, not minding if they would be seen, but most, wouldn't. It was a late night after all.

"!?" She turned speechless to that, only to blush and start ranting a bit, like a little kid. "P-put me down! What are you doing?" she asks much not addressing him as a higher royal such as herself but much puzzled over this little action. She never allowed anyone to carry her that way, more like a bride and she doesn't want to leave her room as well. '\_Don't tell me he's taking me to his room!?' \_Her mind was starting to think of the craziest things that can happen, and likewise to that, she wasn't really ready yet. She gulped again and continued her rants. "I can walk by myself, I want my room back!" she added, but not noisier, because it might disturb the others.

Even so, he didn't mind her. He lead himself to his open room while he still walked firm with gesture, and carried her lightly like a bride in his arms. There, he had his majestic futon and the pillows were even pretty. His room was well decorated and his windows give off the best view and angle of their town. She stopped ranting to that, after being fascinated with the designs of his room, not minding that he was carrying her still. He gently glanced at her when she was calm, and lightly gave a small smile; while he places her down to sit alongside with him.

"!" she was speechless again. Her heart pounded crazy and her face was red as a tomato, embarrassed because she thought that he'd do something else to her. She had herself thinking of those but he just wanted her to see his room, and he was blank those manners, though he smiled partially but faded it immediately. She only sat firm and looked from his window, her eyes widened, seeing how big their town is. "The town is beautiful." She commented further. She never had seen their place properly on her room and whenever she walks outside, she wouldn't enjoy because the Tenshi bodyguards would always be there to tail on her. However, right now, along with the light of the moon, she sees it and feels it.

He nodded also. "My room is the best view. My mother told the servants to decorate it as well for my luxury." He said, making her face him. He sighed to that though with a light sad tone. "My room's too big and it is too decorated, I feel uncomfortable and empty moreover." He added, but didn't hint on something, except for his

mere truth. "It goes the same when you think of me every time as an annoying person!"

"No, I didn't think of that." She responds, defending herself while she frowns. "I never said that. I like you." she added, but didn't mean love on that side. "You're a good prince and you're a strong one" it so happens that you don't just mingle well with a crowd, but its fine. You're fine the way you are." She speaks further, giving a thumbs up which was regularly done by males.

He understood that since she would always say that but he knew that she was still dodging his question moreover times, and didn't continue to ask for it anymore. He wanted to be normally loved and around her instead, while deep inside he would really long for her. He doesn't even know when it started but he really liked her and would get jealous immediately when she's with others. Even so, he held it to himself not to let her think that this is awkward; so far, half is working. "Then Aka, why can't you fall for me?" he asked another.

"!" she was back to the question again, which is why she avoided talking to him much but too bad he doesn't recognize that. Still, she replies with respect. "You deserve someone better than me. Think of it." She speaks, explaining it to him informative and based on what most male oni would like. "Even if the oni race is depleting and women are important, we oni still have hearts and wishes to be with the oni we like! not by a set-up marriage unless that the two won't mind." She was a bit puzzled now that he looked at her, giving an 'I-don't-mind' look. This troubles her. "Well, I mind. Like I said, I am not ready for these kinds of things. We can't just marry just because you want it and our families wanted this, but you have to consider me too. I hope you get what I mean." She does really hope a lot.

"I do." He says. "Take your time, I'll wait."

"I don't like you to wait."

"?"

"You don't deserve me." She added, getting part annoyed because he is persistent. She told him times 'no' and that she doesn't want to marry him, but thinks carefully because she doesn't like hurting him. She already hurts this man before her many times because of her recklessness and also her attitudes, along with her denial but she still thinks part of herself too. Force doesn't really help. "I feel guilty when I say that. I don't know what else to say just to make you understand more. I feel annoyed when you say you would wait and then you wait for nothing" I'm crushing you yet you don't mind! you're a masochist." She added, with a frown.

Iyori knew that. He was used to it. Everyone he knew almost belittled him and he learned to adapt to the bitter world along with the harsh and piercing words that can hit directly to the heart as if it would be stitched completely and biased to courses. It was strange after all, but he didn't remind him of that much anymore. It was the basic logic of the person too. He didn't spoke to that further, but lifted his hand instead and moved nearer her, which kind of scared her. She thought that he's going to slap him or hurt him for saying such things, but he caresses her cheek instead. "It's okay." He said

another. "If it is you, I don't mind. I don't want to hear any of those words againâ€| it won't work on me."

Aka blinks, which was further flustered again with all his unexpected replies. She was blushing because he was touching his cheek but at the same time sad because she can feel his suffering deep inside. It was not only emotion but longing for something. She tried to sympathize along with him to understand but then she doesn't know where she got wrong on explaining. Everything was already told, but he kept on being like this? '\_Iyoriâ€|'\_ she wanted to apologize but something tells her she shouldn't. She goes red more when he neared her.

He didn't hold himself back. "â€|Because Aka is very special to meâ€| all the time." He speaks and then pulled her closer, making them inches to centimeters very close, their lips almost meeting, but was postponed because she withdraws and looks away to the side, telling him to stop non-verbally. He realized that he went through the line, making her upset. "I'm sorry." He immediately apologizes afterwards because he doesn't want her to be angered.

"â€|" She didn't speak further to that and moved on with another sentence. "I'm sleepy now." Her face was flushed tomato more and she cannot stop bit, but for now she was safe. Her heart pounded greater than what she felt earlier after that and stood up, while he helps her. "â€|" She slowly takes his hand and then avoids looking at him directly, but then she thought it was pretty rude. "Uhm, thank you for showing me your room, and sorry." She adds, bowing and then walked out.

He watched her walk out; finding her face adorable when she reacted but then he was both angered and sad that he made something she doesn't like, knowing that his actions are sometimes forceful and it couldn't be prevented. When he knew that she was gone, his eyes narrowed a little, having a slight serious look and moved one of his precious things aside recklessly, but less sound, still disappointed.

### 3. 00x CHAPTER 2

\*\*akaxgan \*\*\*\*\_says... \_ \*\*SHORT CHAPTER SINCE IT'S JUST A TALK. If you read this chapter (and I'm gonna spoil it a bit), I kind of referred Kazama's attitude to the Otome game while retaining his sluggish tone and his manner of speaking. I hope I don't offend the Kazama fans out there /o/ I love him too so much 3

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><p>It had been like that ever since, and those times of closure were brought to a limit. Aka was feeling uncomfortable each day she'd see him but didn't show him that because she feels his dark aura now, and the sense that he's really serious which sometimes scares her. Even if she was brave and she's extraordinary, her rank was lower than him and she's under his territory. There's a law stating death or punishment in the court if she defies the order of the clan that adopted them for the care, but Iyori was kind enough not to treat them like slaves, unless if he snaps. The Shirabuki and Tenshi were still in good terms, and the elders really voted much for both of them.</p>

Even so, the Shirabuki princess felt like she was chained towards the Tenshi prince which wasn't good. She doesn't feel free, and she was often forced to say yes to marriage and produce children immediately. She was called selfish many times because she didn't care and she was honestly scared of things like that. She ignored most comments because they're a dying race and cannot help but feel weak inside despite being titled as the strongest female oni of the West. The public thinks that if the two strongest oni of the West mate and have a family, they would produce more warriors that are thoroughly skilled. Aka didn't give a damn to that.

She took her time practicing the sword anyhow and feels pissed whenever she can recall the voices of those who think that she is worthless. She wanted to contradict them but she couldn't just submit to the wishes of arranged marriages. This is why she avoids it and would often practice on her own and do something productive to her account, since her fiancÃ© is also a leader and is probably busy with the rest of the work. Along with them are the other oni in different sides, so they are not alone.

Aka sways her short sword while wearing a blind fold, practicing her stance and was used to the very direction of her hair strands whenever she is engaged in battle. She was wearing a regular fighting kimono for males since she had such uniforms and she was permitted to, but has to wear the kimono whenever the Tenshi clan elders would pay visit to their house. So far the days passed and not much visits were done, so she feels safe. However, she was still chained.

Simply thinking of it pissed her more. She wanted to see humans again and she doesn't want to be confined inside a large place where the rest of the Shirabuki clan oni stayed too. If there wasn't war at the first place she would have not been in this position. She blames the first oni clans before them and half the humans because they killed their kind, but it was hard to judge. With these in mind, she kept on swaying while feeling the wind, and her sword making the sharpest sounds.

\_ "You're still doing that?" \_

She paused for awhile, recognizing that voice and smiled light, not removing her blind fold. "Yes, Chikage nii-sama." She speaks in formal language and continued her activity, though she doubts. "You're supposed to be in Kyoto, what brings you here?"

Chikage Kazama gave a small smirk, responding with his low voice and not minding her if she addressed him by the first name. "It feels disgusting when you call me that. I came for something." He said, and respected her as a woman, because women of the oni clan are much valuable now, considering their low numbers in the population after the war commenced, sweeping most of them and males left abundant much. "And I heard you're not in good terms againâ€¦ you're a gofer thinking of emotions." He commented further, while he stood there with his simple yet elegant â€" looking kimono on him.

She puffed her cheeks to that but didn't mind. "Don't think of humans like that. You're so mean."

"I don't get you." he says, moving some of his hair on the side while he pauses, closing his eyes and felt the passing of the wind, which

interrupted much his hair fix. He didn't mind that, being narcissistic most of the time and didn't judge himself because he was 'handsome' enough. Instead, he judged more of the others. "You're a demon yet you get to mingle with humans as if you're one of them. That isn't even right." His voice was of normal tone, though he stopped walking knowing that he's in front of her much in a short distance, enough for them themselves to hear each other in a conversation.

"I guess you really don't understand me!" she says with a sigh, much to her reply and withdraws her sword, paying respect to the conversation and smiled up to him. "Humans aren't that bad and I feel comfortable with them. Of course I prefer oni, but still we can match equally, that is." She added with her reasoning and then faced the taller oni.

He blinked to her reply and gave a small sigh first. "Still you're weird. If you believe that way, then I am not stopping you." he said, making her smile again with a soft and short chuckle, and then he looks. "It makes sense that you and Shiranui work well as idiots."

"I-idiots?!" she blurted with a blush. "Oi, Shiranui's not an idiot and he's incredible with his guns. And, and that doesn't make any sense at all!" she added protesting in front of him after being insulted. Of course the blond oni was being entertained at the moment â€“ anything that pisses the red head was simply cute and a bit easing to his eyes.

He reasoned again getting with her response. "I don't care what Shiranui has been thinking for you but I find it annoying that he's acting obsessive and flaunting around you." that was the last one of his teases as he looks at the side, only to find her nibbling harder mentally as if she wanted to hit him. He cast off his last amusement to that before he fades the look and changes the topic.

"However, what is it that you're still hiding in you? I have no time for guessing games." He added firmly, straight to the point. He wasn't that straight to concerns and emotions because he believes of his own ego; meaning he is too high to show such emotions prior to public and the feeling is not that much of an importance too.

She faded her façade and looked at him while she blinks her face. "!" she stops for seconds, and looked at the male. "Do I have to explain everything in detail again?" she asks and then sat down unconditionally, making herself sit like a guy and rubbed her head, while the oni before her walks again nearer. She didn't mind that, lifting her head to glance at him, her eyes and his eyes with the matching color; an even tone of reflection, as if they were simply siblings, but they are not. "I guess I have to, but first of all, what do you need again?" she asks, trying to divert the topic.

Kazama spoke evenly while he sits down also, knowing that he cannot bend for too long since it looked awkward. "Your elders are giving me something after confirming my leave, as I go to Kyoto, with Shiranui and Amagiri." He added, also stating some information. "Seems like Koudou gave up on the Bakufu and he went missing." He added another, at least sensible.

Aka looks to that. "Wh-What?" she asks, knowing that Koudou is pretty important and the research helped a lot but did some damage to both parties. She frowns. "You leaving makes me think that I'm going to be left alone here without someone else to side onâ€|" she was concerned of herself again, and she was afraid of her fiancÃ© being the one to take care of her in some different manners. It's not that she's defenseless but she really thinks of herself moreover before she thinks of others.

"You're still selfish â€" you should think of the oni." He noted, as if it's not the first time he would have said that to her, but he knew that she was just young and she kept on rejecting that. "True that you're valuable, but don't think of it too much." He added, advising her to look around and worry about their race too, as much as he worries deep inside, but never shows it.

"I know that!" she responds with a grunt and looking at him more, but turned down because she cannot even raise a voice towards him.

"If you don't like your husband to be, then let go and find someone else. If it doesn't work then do the methods that you're good at." He advises also, making her calmer but couldn't resist that look on her face. He was familiar of her ever since she was young and knew that she admired him because he was the one who taught her how to do well with swords, and she eventually addressed her as a 'brother' even if he didn't permit it at first because she's not a 'Kazama'. However, because she had a strong personality, she's beautiful, she's a princess and she is very prideful in some terms, he allowed her finally, and thus he cared even though it wasn't obvious. "Iyori is difficult though." He added, knowing that was true, as he hears from the oni that he has been talking to.

She also knows that which sometimes send shivers down her spine. "Nii-samaâ€| can I come with you then?" she asks, for a small plead.

"Why should I bring you?" he questions. "Stay here and be a good future wife. That seems sensible."

"Don't tell me that!" she protested immediately, wanting to cry to that but made him look blank, knowing that she's too serious and she feels shackled with everything. How he knew was because he'd been watching even though he wasn't around. "I'm \_not\_ his wife to beâ€| and it won't be happening soonâ€| I like him but there's something off and I am not yet ready. I want to venture out there. I don't want to stay here longer." She added as she bowed down even to ask for his help. "Please help me with this thing! I beg you!" she added.

Seeing a princess beg in front of him is surprising, but knowing this girl who had been watched for most times and had experienced the tragedy of the war when she was not even that experienced, along with her clan members dramatically down to the few, he wanted to reconsider. He asked such question because he wanted her to back out, and he thought now that he should have not mentioned this to her. Looking at her made him feel guilty but he didn't show that. Instead, he gave her a pat on the head. "You can't." he responds making her raise her head up.

"Please, nii-sama! I promise I will do everything you say when we go there! Iyori doesn't need to know and I really want to get out of

this placeâ€| I want to go to a place where I can feel comfortable and free at least." She added and pleaded more, but she gets another pat on the head. "Chikage nii-samaâ€|" she added, her voice a bit faint.

"It will be troublesome if you come, and if you really wanted that, you shouldn't ask me but the supposedly husband." He says in a formal manner, withdrawing his hand and didn't apologize for it, since it wasn't in his nature to do so. He stands up and let her follow him in action but only to that. He looks at her again. "I shall discuss with the elders and you should do what you should do." He says final, walking pass by her and closed his eyes, thinking too much but avoided her look. It makes him feel problematic whenever she gives him one of those faces.

She was speechless to that, allowing him to pass over her, making her heart cry. \_'He can't even help me with thisâ€'\_ she thought, her head down while she feels his presence gone after some minutes. Demons were like that â€" fast and unexpected. When no one is there in her place, she thinks clearly, closing her eyes and had made up her mind.

\_If no one's going to help me, then I am on my own." \_Thus the Shirabuki princess Aka thinks quiet, serious and obviously sure.

#### 4. 00x CHAPTER 3

\_Few Years Laterâ€|\_

\_Shinsengumi Headquartersâ€|\_

"Good morning, Heisuke."

A small greeting from a girl that goes by the name Yukimura Chizuru speaks, while one of the Shinsengumi captains recognize her who was sweeping quietly on the open ends, and then walks to her. She was used to this already, along with her being secretive of her being an oni which she doubts and knows only to search for her father, disguising as a guy. The Shinsengumi knew that she's a woman and permitted her to be with them as much as she can, for she has already known the secrets and was considered as one of them already. She served them well and has helped much, while being on patrol with the others too.

Heisuke Toudou stiffens a small yawn while he smiles energetically. "Yoh, Chizuru!" he responds, while he sees her sweeping. "Early up you're already cleaning; did you even eat?" he asks while he receives a shook. "Eeh!? That's not how things work here." He said with a small pout and placed her broom on the other side while he proposes something. "Let's cook together. It's Sanosuke and my shift anyway this morning."

Chizuru blinks to that. "Ah, you and Sanosuke-san?" she asks while confirming then got a nod. "Mm. That's a good idea." She nods back too with a soft smile and proceeded walking, following him along.

"But I think we can walk out for awhile, I mean, everyone's still

sleepingâ€|" he said in a whisper, while she blinks more to that phrase. "Chizuru, we don't have to mention this out on the othersâ€| we'll be back immediately. It's fun walking outside the early morningâ€|" he added even slight as she listens, still flustered of what she would respond towards him.

\_It's too early and you're making a move now, how evil.\_

Heisuke stopped, making a large fidgety face, obviously surprised by the other voice, which was entertaining. He grunted. "Oi, Sano!" he said with a typical rant. "What? I wasn't planning anything!" he added completely denying and making a false response, Chizuru smiling a bit while she also fidgets troubled whatnot to answer.

Sanosuke Harada looked at him with a small smirk. "Well, I heard you're walking outside, without Hijikata-san's permission? This is bad." He added, making the other male fidget more. It wasn't once that he got a scold and a hit from the vice captain in charge and Shinpachi Nakahara wouldn't really back him up.

"E-Eh, fineâ€|"

Chizuru just chuckled, continuing to watch them further. Even so, the young girl would always think of them and look after them like they were actually family. She got used to this situation already, even with the bickering despite the fact that she's the only girl taken up by the Shinsengumi them selves. She smiled to that, which made the two captains blink at her stare of silence.

Sanosuke smiles seeing her still in silence. "Good morning, Chizuru." He said firm and warm.

"Good morningâ€|" she greeted again and smiled back.

"Looks like it's a nice morning, yes?"

"Mm."

"You're too early to flirt around, Sanoâ€|" Shinpachi spoke, ruffling his head a bit and then smiled at the girl also while yawning, his muscles flexing a bit. He got warmed up by a simple look at the eye and then followed next was Hajime Saito who quietly walked to glance at them. The last one who went out from his fine nap was Okita Souji. It was early but it looked like everyone seemed energized despite the fact that it was Sanosuke's early shift of patrol. Others like Gensaburou Inoue, Kondou Isami, Itou and Susumu Yamazaki were still on their naps for minutes, still feeling the futons.

It was always like this in their headquarters. A few months after taking in Chizuru, they had been used to her around, and also those times where she would be around the men feeling less awkward because of their closure. Everyday activity in the Shinsengumi matters a lot, since they respect each other even if they had different beliefs themselves. It wasn't already that shocking enough to show weaknesses and secrets in their campus as well.

The morning was filled will the noises of three head captains. Chizuru would always get used to saying "Everyone seems really happy" each morning that they'd wake up on. Their lieutenant known the demon vice â€" captain that goes by the name Hijikata Toshizou would be the

last one to scowl at them and remind them of their duties, followed by a nudge of their tease about his 'horrible' poetry. It was the least they can do to defend themselves specifically with Okita grabbing around his small notebooks and his ink so he cannot write more. The rest are on smiles whenever they do that, not protesting but instead, enjoying the current scene.

\_ "Damn it, Okita! Give me that!" \_

Hijikata would scold more at the first captain of the squad because of his recklessness and off with the reading. While reading he would protest on how much he grows sick of all the tasks that they were given and no short breaks were announced. Even so, their lieutenant wouldn't mind, as if it was part of their job and the rest of the squad would just sigh to it. Hence, their lieutenant gets the nickname of a demon.

It was supposed to be the same this morning, along with their only female's fidgets every now and then, until they were disturbed with sword slashing sounds a bit distant from their certain location. The Shinsengumi members, having sharp ears, also called as the Wolves of Mibu, quit their arguments and paused just to move quickly, heading on the other direction. Shinpachi went first since he was nearer followed by the other main captains, and then next the subordinates.

The sword slashes continued while the blade swung inverted, the dull edge, to avoid killing. Some subordinates of the Shinsengumi members dropped down after the piece of slashes and mere avoidance the wielder was doing, surprisingly a person in disguise. Upon arrival, the squad leaders were mesmerized for some minutes because the mysterious weapon wielder took down seven at one blow. For someone who is rare to drop by and know their headquarters, it must be a spy or an assault.

The Shinsengumi drew their swords faster just to make sure, and the others were holding back for awhile, just to look at the face of this person. The identity was hidden under a large cap and a scarf that covers the mouth too, thus giving the impression of a ninja in queer manners. Even so, it came to slash about.

"Who the heck is this?" Heisuke muttered, withdrawing his sword but didn't move to make an attack. He grunted another. "Early in the morning we're being attacked like that!"

Sanosuke held on to his spear. "Even soâ€¢ with those small slashesâ€¢ taking seven on one blow is not a joke." He looked at the person, but blinked his eyes because he himself was taller and buffed, the one drawing the blade was shorter, and the figure was dressed with mere male clothes. The hands held dainty and the movement was as similar to the shape of the crescent moon. He thinks quiet while he figures out the gesture of the thing. '\_I have never heard of a male moving like the crescent moon accentâ€¢'\_ he didn't give more speculations.

Chizuru blinks her eyes, wanting to know who it was but the figure turned to the other side instead, and ignored them. It was walking on the other side too while the squad captains feel ignored, and those that were hit standing up while they try to attack again. Hence, the figure evaded and hit them with the case of the sword, sending them

again to the ground, making the squad leaders blink again and saw the figure walk to another direction while speaking nothing.

"I don't like this guy!" Shinpachi said grunting and attacked first, his blade swinging. He charged before anything else, but to his surprise, the figure turned and blocked him with the case again in a casual manner. It was the first weapon that was showcased before he was pushed back. "Tch!" he grunted because he didn't even recognize the face, and the figure was far shorter than him. It was disappointing as he continue to make slashes while the figure continues to evade, then followed by Heisuke's impatience. Because the two were attacking now, the figure moved to the side and pulled another weapon, a longer case for a longer blade while making an upper kick. Heisuke and Shinpachi dodged it, almost hitting them.

"Ma, this fellow looks really strong." Okita commented while he smiles but then he doesn't like those things. Seeing his two comrades dodge and almost hit made him forward, with slashes again and then successfully cut the hat, revealing the figure's blond hair and the red eyes. He blinked as he smiles. "Blond? Well, this means that we should kill him."

"He's pretty tricky though." Heisuke muttered, gritting his teeth.  
"Hey, what do you need anyway!?" he blurted again.

\_ "I don't have business with you, but with your leader only. I don't want to create violence further." \_ The figure replied blank, the voice firm. It was a genuine female's voice forced to disguise through a male, though most fell for the trap. Even so, this was a disguise and it cannot be confirmed out.

Hijikata responded. "What do you want with Kondou-san?" he asked straight. "If you are here not to offend anyone, then why did you attack the other Shinsengumi members?" he added casually so they won't be really bothered, expecting one sensible answer. The other squad members would like to know that too.

The figure closed its eyes. "I don't need to tell you that."

"Bastard replying things like thatâ€|" Shinpachi grunted while Sanosuke prepared for a move, stance so they can attack. "It's just a short kid then and whatever you need with Kondou-san means that you're after something! It's not even a reasonable excuse!" he added and went off along with some pissed squad leaders who felt the 'pain'. They even got pissed when it didn't move further, and Chizuru trying to figure out who it was.

Once they got their gauge of hate surpassing to the limit, they charged immediately, but the figure didn't move on its place. Even so, they didn't consider this, untilâ€|

\_ "Everyone, stop!" \_

Kondou casually walked up on them and halted before anything else. He frowned back when he saw them and it was too early. He looked at the pissed Squad Leaders and some members of the Shinsengumi who were hurt after being hit by the figure. By the time he found space, he faced back and saw the blond. He sighed while he breathes for some

scolding. "Oi, I didn't tell you to greet off my men harshly like that! Seriously, someone really needed to teach you manners!" he added.

"Sorry, they were in my way." The figure responded and looked at the side, making a small 'tsk'. "I did my best to say that I need to speak with you and they blocked me attempting to kill me off." It added in a normal tone, yet with a child like appeal towards the captain of the Shinsengumi.

"Ah, I forgot to warn you about that."

"Kondou-san." Hijikata asks, starting again with a brow raised. "Bringing a visitor like this who treats our men with no respect is a sin; why did you allow this to happen?" he questioned, still curious but then he got a look flashing at the figure. "Who is this person?" the same goes for the people who were hit and those that wanted to know.

The figure removed the scarf and the slashed hat off while throwing it on the floor. They saw the clear image of the short blond hair and the red eyes, making the person look like a 'demon' and the clothing that fits suitable. The height was not tall, but merely matching a bit of Chizuru's through closure, and the body wrapped in that clothing makes it look like a male. Thus, the person began to spoke again. "Kondou-sensei, I came all the way here from a far place! though I thank you for approving my request." It looked at the members. "Wow, looks like the Shinsegumi had buffed members after all."

Kondou sighed to that again. "Next time, \_Raion\_, if you make your way here, don't attack anyone! this kid! It was a relief that you're not lost after hearing out that you came by yourself. You're early though." he added another while he smiles.

"S-Shut up, I am not a kid!" Raion protested with a flushed face and puffed cheeks, seemingly doing an action of a kid, but then continued with the cool act. "How can I make a grand entrance if you keep on being pushy like this? And have you even cleaned up the place? Didn't Dr. Matsumoto advised you to clean the whole headquarters!?" added the blond person again, with eyes a bit furious and grunting, making the Captain fidget to the excuse again.

Okita was having the nerve. "You look so close since you're shouting at our captain." He said in a small mode. "Raion, eh? Named after Lion? Your parents are lazy enough to give you a name. I bet they even didn't want to name you." he added with a smirk.

Kondou blinked to that. "Souji, do not act like that to a new person." Knowing that half looked offended, Raion didn't respond to that and instead crossed the arms full while waiting for an introduction. He faced the members who were waiting for an explanation too after all, since it was beneficial. "Ah, everyone! 'he's' not an enemy." He started and gave a smile. "Pardon the attitude, he was raised roughly~ his name is Shirabuki Raion. He's a kid I have found stray while having a round trip when I was healing. I asked of him to come here as a surprise but I didn't expect the early commotion."

"Don't tell me you're hiring a kid?" Sanosuke asked, looking at the

person who kept on ignoring them but eyed clearly. He smiled. "Well, a kid with slight a woman's face that isâ€| Kondou-san, what are you planning to do?" he asked.

Raion didn't comment to that further and ignored them. Before Kondou can discuss, he already shift his way facing back. "I'm leaving." He said.

Kondou blinked. "Oi Raion! Don't be stubborn like that!"

"I didn't come here to fight over these people. As if I would have a match with the Shinsengumi. Sensei, I am glad you're doing well, but this?" he continued as he looked.

"You came here because this was your request and then you're leaving? That's practically impolite as I have given you permission. I trust you with that."

"â€| Kondou. Why are you damn niceâ€|" it made the blond person look back again and walked near him while he observed the Shinsengumi. There, he started complaining. "You're going to group me with guys taller ahead of me? I think that's pretty offensive, Kondou-sanâ€|" he said another and looked at the captain who was far taller than him.

"As if we would group with you." Shinpachi said with a scoff. "We're Squad Captains and you are just a new recruit. Don't take things lightly here as you speak." He added with a low grunt and faced Kondou. "Like what Sano said, this kid? We don't even know where you got him aside from the fact that you are grateful meeting this person." He speaks further, obviously pissed.

"Howeverâ€|" Hijikata said, crossing the line of talk. "By the way you move your arm and the weapon case whereas you should have sliced the stomachs of our membersâ€| I can tell that you are pretty skilled." He commented.

Raion looked at him. "Thank you for noticing that." He said.

"But still you're attitudeâ€|"

"Yes, you have attitude problems." Kondou continued further and tried to calm him down. "It's just like what the kids say and the restâ€| you behave like a demon. Try changing that by starting to get along well with the Shinsengumiâ€| not just with me." He requested also trying to earn the trust despite the fact that they were offended. The captain wanted to clear that.

Seeing the faces of the curious leaders made Raion halt. In fact he was probably conscious. "â€|" he remained silent for awhile and tried to get along as what Kondou says. "I apologize then for my rudeness." He started and gave a small bow, as taught by the elders and then faced them. He blankly gave a small deadpan face but was true with the word. For some seconds he was ashamed and looked at the other side, still not used to these kinds of things because he was more alone and perhaps with one fellow most of the time. Groups were a big problem for him based on his actions for he doesn't get along well with it.

Sanosuke smiled to that. "At least you apologized. So, it's Raion,

right?" he said in a chirper mode. "I would like to thank you for a bit since you actually used the back of your blade and the case instead of your sword directly." He added but didn't receive a reply. "Tsk, you're a shy one, aren't you?"

"No I am not." Raion spoke again. "I am not used to these kinds of things."

"I shall introduce everyone to you then to start off." Kondou proposed and moved. "This is Hijikata-san, the vice captain, followed by Souji Okita, the first squad captain; and then Sanosuke Harada, tenth squad captain; Shinpachi Nakagura, sixth squad captain; Heisuke Toudou, Saito Hajime then Yukimura Chizuru. Oh, this is the only girl, just to be sure." He added another remembering that he didn't realize that Chizuru was a girl also that time when they got her. He gave another smile. "You're following Hijikata's orders and my orders from now on if you want to stay, you understand?"

"Understood." The response was immediate and fast while he kept on dodging the eyes, and the looks. He flinched further when he eyed at one member of the Shinsengumi who resembles someone who is he thoroughly avoiding, avoiding the eyes and all. The hair and the structure seemed so nostalgic he kept silent and minimal too!

specifically to the one they call 'Saito Hajime' who has been looking at him for almost the whole time, saying nothing because he probably can see through him already.

## 5. 00x CHAPTER 4

\_ "You're staying here." \_

"Thank you." That was Raion's response again, the tone not changing. He bowed a little of respect while he eyes at the taller and broader Sanosuke who showed the room. Even so, he felt uncomfortable with the stare not that he mind but likewise this is a foreign land for him. He had his swords on his waist and looked at the room before anything else. The moment of silence was quiet, and it was also long which sent him to a bored state, until the red haired squad captain talked.

Sanosuke spoke. "If you need anything, you can ask right away."

" You don't have to be nice towards a foreigner like me, but I appreciate it." He flashes a smile which signifies her grateful thanks even in the smallest matters. This is why he kept to a minimal style than being far exposed. He continued to walk on the room and cleared himself with any kind of obstruction while he leaves the red haired person to silence. It was like he's thinking differently.

"Well, I'll apologize on behalf of my comrades Shinpachi and Heisuke also earlier. They should have not said those things too~ but it was pretty natural because you were mysterious."

"I'm not going to be that reckless next time. I was kept with that attitude. But for the Shinsengumi I will reconsider. Once again,

thank you and I'm sorry."

Sanosuke blinked to the formality despite the brute attack he gave but then smiled. "Right. I shall be going now." He said and closed the door, sliding it so he cannot be disturbed. However, he still felt mysterious on figuring out the person, as if it was too familiar to the approach. \_'Whenever I see that face it reminds me of someone but I couldn't compare muchâ€| that faceâ€|'\_ it looks like he was thinking hard as well, but knowing senses, he shrugged off and shift on the other side now that he was been called.

\* \* \*

><p>Chizuru and the others were having a meeting, as the Shinsengumi heads were sitting along with Kondou after sending Raion to the natural room. Shinpachi felt uneasy after the encounter, and Heisuke grunted a bit but gave up, while Hijikata remained stable and so as Saito, followed by Okita who sat with a normal smile. The captain cannot help but eye at them skeptically as if there was a problem. In return, the Squad leaders gave him a "Yes we have a problem" look which made him fidget more to the cause.</p>

\_ "There's something really uneasy with that kid." \_

\_ "Seems to me you and he had the same age too so don't bother, Heisuke." \_

Heisuke grumbled to that. "I'm not a kid and I am capable of killing and I can drink." He stressed that query but there is still something that bothers him too much, making his arms fold. "The moment I look at the eyes of the person I felt a strange aura, as if the title 'oni' as you said, Kondou-san, isn't just a title at all."

Sanosuke sat beside Heisuke while he was saying that. "Raion was obedient and polite when I sent him on the room but he gave me the look that he wanted to be left alone. Alsoâ€| the look seems familiar." He adds, tapping his chin a little with a troubled expression.

"What do you mean familiar? He's weird!"

Shinpachi started talking to while the two were at it. "Oi, I'm still pissed at the attitude he showed and hitting our men like that even if it was not on the sharper side! And he's a foreigner whom we didn't even meet but only Kondou-san did so how will we know that it's worth to let him be in the Shinsengumi?" he asked with a questioning voice. "He might even attack anyone just like he did this morning!"

Kondou halted that. "You're not scared of a weapon wielding kid, are you not, Nakagura?" he asked making the other flinch, as the captain faced the squad leaders. "I will take responsible if you insist, since you don't seem to trust the new recruit as much as I place my trust on him. It's understandable after all the commotion this morning. Though, now that you mentioned it, he does resemble someone but I had the feeling that I shouldn't compare both."

Okita responded. "Does it ring a bell saying a demon's name now? So we're keeping a demon kid?" he said off with his usual tone. "That case, we really have to kill that kid insteadâ€| no matter how much

skilled he is." He added with his own ways.

"N-no that's not what I really meant, Souji!"

\_ "He resembles Kazama-san!" \_ The silence was present afterwards, hearing Chizuru talk with a small frown on her face. They blinked to that, finally bringing to the conclusion. There, the only female continued to talk about it. "The blond hair, and the movement of the sword, so far it seems Kazama like to me, as well as the red color of the eyes, but" she paused to that for some seconds and continued. "The eyes were much feminine! and hinted sadness as if he doesn't want anyone to mind his business because no one will understand him. If he's a stray as you say, Kondou-san, maybe that's the reason why he dislikes being grouped to people. I can only tell that he's having a hard time based on what I feel."

Heisuke continued to that. "So a stray he is, but he doesn't have to show that attitude and that avoidance. We won't hurt him don't tell me you're thinking that he's scared of us that is why he attacked in a cool manner?" he questioned back further making sense for awhile as the other Squad leaders remained silent.

"I-I'm not sure but I don't know people with those kinds of eyes had their secrets and fears!"

"Then if that's what you think, someone should watch over her." Saito spoke out with mere blankness, breaking them for a bit since he talks rare. His tone was normal, and also gentle. Same it is for times like this. "It bothers me also, having that appearance of the same demon that has been after Yukimura."

The Shinsengumi were well aware that Kazama Chikage and the two other oni following him were after Chizuru, but never knew of the reasons yet. They only knew that they were desperate for her, and that Chizuru kept on her cool being severely clueless of what they wanted from her. Because of this she's often with any Squad Leader during patrol since the three might take her in and then have a fight with the members of the group. They were considered enemies of the Shinsengumi.

"So you're saying that it might be an 'oni' after Chizuru?!" Heisuke added while having a high voice, not allowing that with his nature. "It might be one of that freak's relative or something in disguise while changing the name? The name was also weird!" he added another to the protest, making Shinpachi nod to approve.

Hijikata brought up his conclusion to this, but first, he faces Kondou. "What else do you know about this person?"

Kondou was given time to explain. He folds his arms while he speaks clear. "While you were away off the war, I was strolling around and with other members who were here. I was looking for a place to eat since I was bored inside the headquarters, and then I meet the kid who eats a lot on one table. Because there wasn't an extra table to it, I asked if I can sit beside him and he didn't mind. I noticed that he was carrying his own sword and that he's a foreigner, but didn't think of Kazama's resemblance that time. He was quiet while eating and I asked him if he was alone and what was he doing on some place like this. The only response he gave me was 'why do you care, old man?' ". He paused to that and smiled, knowing that he was given

that impression.

Okita didn't like that. "That freak calling you like that? I'll kill him." He said with a grin.

Thus their captain continued the story again. "I found the person interesting too, though I have to admit that the small frame is somehow not fitted for the weapons he has, and considering the fact that he's a kid made me think of Heisuke for awhile." He looks at them again. "So, I spend times eating and recovering not forgetting the kid no matter how many times it would tell that I am annoying, and found him at the same spot. It had been like that while I had been staying put until a ruckus happened on the same place where I would usually eat onâ€|. A group of bandits whereas the faces were unknown started attacking people and robbed everything, but Raion, he didn't run away. He was smaller and he was thinner than them, dodging on to the swords fast just like a demon, and took them down."

"So?" Sanosuke questioned.

"I was defenseless that time, asking him to run away and handle things but he stood ahead and fends the place himself. It was a brave act, thus I owed my life back there." He can remember the face of the kid. "Little did I know that he had injuries on his body, as Dr. Matsumoto passed to check on me again, telling that he knew of Raion, who just left after Koudou disappeared to nowhere."

Chizuru opened her mouth to that. "Raion knows my father?"

He nods. "But not much since Dr. Matsumoto told me that he left and went stray, his whereabouts unknown. After that day while we're eating at the same place, I asked him personally if he knew Koudou. He said he used to work under him but only for a year and they weren't really close. He didn't have the reason to stay anymore since the man abandoned him and so did he, leaving him wandering and surviving around. Of course, I cannot let this go."

"Another one of Koudou's workers has landed on our group." Hijikata said while he places a look at Chizuru. "If what Kondou-san says is true then we have a lot of reason to let him stay here. He might help find Koudou and as he says, he owed his life to this kid." However, while saying that, the demon vice â€" captain cannot help but sigh. "Even so, Kondou-san, owing a life to a kidâ€| you really looked pretty weak that time by all meansâ€|"

He fidgets. "You don't have to be mean about that, Toshi." He said and smiled also. "I also took interest. We can't let a talent like this be a hindrance in our way."

"I still think he's weird and all." Heisuke muttered again. "Also, we have yet to ask if he had heard of demons and that he resembles one."

"B-But Heisuke, that's too negative and forwardâ€|" Chizuru said with slow suggestion, still worrying. '\_Now that it was mentioned, yes, that look, but there's something else that was botheringâ€| I just don't know.' \_

"He was also forward on attacking our men and it wasn't a good joke or a grand entrance as you say."

"Very well, Heisuke, keep watch of him then." Okita said with a sly smile as the younger squad captain fidget to it. "The one who suggested it should be the one who would do it â€" isn't that right?" he corrected to that, while he looked at him again and then Hijikata. "So Hijikata-san, what's your final decision with this?"

Everyone was all open ears to what their lieutenant would say. "â€|" he was silent for awhile and then talked final. "Heisuke will have to watch over for suspicious actions then, and we shall continue asking tomorrow. Today has been a lot."

With that, the people nodded and the case was dismissed.

## 6. 00x CHAPTER 5

Inside the lone room was the 'confined' Raion Shirabuki, knowing that no one will approach him. He blinks his face as he saddens with a small frown, only to pull his kimono down knowing that no one would look at him, and then faced with the binders all over his body. He grunted to the pain, knowing that doing this really hurts his chest. His eyes squinted a little while he presses his hand once on the tough binder and then sighed inward.

He spoke further to himself. "I never knew binders would hurt girlsâ€|", thus the one secret he wishes to keep was stable. He never did binders, so this is the first.

Raion Shirabuki is a girl hiding her chest and her body with binders and in male's clothing. It was also confirmed that Raion Shirabuki and Aka Shirabuki is one person, after the talk and the escape of years that passed. He happens to be a 'she' and that should be kept secret even within the Shinsengumi. Her reasons were unknown as to why a top level and royal blood oni would stay and submit to mere humans whom they call as the Wolves of Mibu. Behind that blond hair lays her long, wavy red hair that was tucked well for a definite disguise. It was too sad that she has to do this for some selfish reasons herself.

She kept quiet also, meek and aware that the people were looking at her suspiciously. She didn't even mind that she has the disguise with some copies of her considered elder brother Kazama, as of the wig that she wears. She would be expecting more the next day tooâ€| '\_Nii-sama will get mad at me and Shiranui and Amagiriâ€|\_ she frowns to that but she thought of her fiancÃ©. \_If Iyori wasn't that desperate I wouldn't have left but he'll kill me inside if I keep on staying with himâ€| Chikage nii-sama isn't around here anyway; I hope he doesn't find me too.\_ She was thinking of many things at the moment while she places back her kimono and looked at her weapons. She made sure that her wig won't fall off so she couldn't be noticed before anything else happens.

There has been a quick nostalgia with that small sentence as well. Two years before, she insisted on leaving without telling Kazama anything, or even her husband â€" to â€" be, but she managed to escape a bit fail when Shiranui recognized that she wasn't acting pretty good that time. All seems too skeptical and scheming, and knowing Shiranui based on Kazama's description, he has some unobvious complex with the oni princess of the Shirabuki clan.

\* \* \*

><p><em>Flashbacks two years beforeâ€|<em>

\_ "You're going to leave aren't you?" Shiranui questioned, sitting brute on the side while he observed the moon. He grunted to that, holding his gun while he faces her, obviously not agreeing to this matter. "Aka oujou-sama, are you even okay with this? Why did you even think of possibly running aroundâ€|" he added and kept distant despite the fact that they have been the closest of friends, which was also the same, not obvious enough (though his best friend complex is thoroughly so oblivious).\_

\_ Aka cannot get enough of her best friend's preaching, despite the fact that she's the noble head and all. She also acted manly at times, but still had a feminine side inside her. So far she acted the way she wanted, people also knowing that Kazama had been the closest relative she had despite the fact that they aren't real siblings. Aka also confessed that she had a slight crush over him and that he really doesn't mind her calling him by the first name since they're off the same lineage, and the marriage was not proposed further because Kazama treated her more like a sister in a different way. Of course, it would be awkward if the two demons mate with that kind of public status, yes? He was also against the idea (specifically Shiranui here who would scream "You're making incest so stop it" though in fact he was just jealous), adding his respects over another noble oni who goes by Iyori, the husband â€" to â€" be of the Shirabuki princess.\_

\_ The princess didn't respond to that and moved casually while she wears a kimono as required by the elders inside the Tenshi place. They allowed the brute oni to visit her because she asked for permission and that Iyori only wanted her happiness, but this was just to tighten her up. While she sits on the seat in her normal manners, sitting like a guy even with that clothes and the fact that no one is watching, she sighed silent.\_

\_ "Oi, sit properly!" he protested, looking away for awhile since he might see something unusual, causing him to have a few flushes of red on his face, making her snicker. When she was finished to that, he gave the sour look again. "You and Kazama are really similar in some waysâ€| both a problem." He started off again, but pushed to the other topic. "Don't leave somewhere else. As if I am around you all the time, you know Amagiri and that brat 'idol' of yours. If only I can stay around here oftenâ€|."\_

\_ She responds to that. "Shiranui, I don't like you worrying about me like that. It doesn't suit you." it was a freeze reply.\_

\_ He flinched to that and protested again. "I wasn't worrying about you. It's just that you can die off easily and you're an idiot."\_

\_ "I'm not an idiot! Sometimes I think that you and Iyori are somewhat similar and you have complex issues!"\_

\_ "Don't compare me to that person!" he grunted more while he gritted his teeth. "Never ever compare me to your freaking fiancÃ© who kept on bringing awkward chills on the spine! Forcing you to do things

like that and submitting to his command while acting cool like he's going to wait for you and at the end, he only wanted you to submit selfishlyâ€¢ sickening to hear that he owns you as much as I kill bastardsâ€¢" he muttered lower again, knowing that the female would frown if he continued and stopped to that. While he was at it, he paused. "Sorry if I brought that up. I didn't mean to. I am here not to see you make that shitty face." He adds more, and it was just one of his best apologies.\_

\_She was used to his attitude since they have been like that ever since, making her smile. "Thank you, Shiranui." She speaks.\_

\_He blinks to that, slight fidgety while he looks at the red eyes of the girl. "O-oi don't even dare cry in front of me, I am not your babysitter and I don't intend to see you like that!" he added with a small troubled look. Seriously, he doesn't know how to deal with these things so he best avoids the situation. 'Kazama is going to bail me if she said something stupid again with me involvedâ€¢' he thinks in a queer manner but knew nothing than to come closer her and pat her by the head. This surprised her a bit, making her look at the taller demon that looked away. "You're fine the way you are â€¢ and don't shed tears for such problem. We'll take care of this shit, you'll see. Bear with it for awhile."\_

\_She felt a bit belittled with that for seconds. After a short dilemma, she nudged the hand away from her hair and protested in front of him, more of a rant which is somewhat childish. "Yeah right you can take care of everything like that! Hmf, I can handle myself and I don't think that it would help if you lump more pressure on me."\_

\_ "O-ho look who is talking â€¢ it's the woman who was about to cry on crap earlier." He teased with a small whistle but kept his distant and his tease off ruffling her hair like a kid. She's still a woman and he values respect on gender cases, specifically for a noble like her. He had enough of the ranting now and made her stop by emphasizing something. "Oi oi, I overheard while Kazama was talking. One time you were debating with him after visiting a few. We'll be leaving sooner." \_

\_ "So?" she asked and wanted to know what was his concern with that, but she was passed by one of his high voices again with matching grunt and piss tones. She nearly walked away to that, thinking 'Here he goes again to start his preaching' just like a normal everyday matter.\_

\_Like what she though, he started again. "You are not leaving." He stressed while placing a hand on his forehead, telling her mentally that she's a headache and that he memorized her actions. "If you become dipshit frenzy and insisted while pleading over Kazama, damn quit it already. It's not like it's the end of the world and don't you dare shed damn tears in front of me if I respond like him for awhile." He added another though inside he knew that it was hard. She was silenced to that again, making him the bad guy. 'Bother, I am being the villain here as I stay.' He thinks but didn't show that and walked near the window again.\_

\_She thought he'd tell more of that but was kind of surprised that it ended faster than those long term scolds â€¢ it was similar to Amagiri but Amagiri's a calmer and respected one instead of the

badmouths that she's been receiving. She followed him near the window as he speaks making her silent again, losing the time to talk.\_

\_ "Don't leave, I mean it. It would be dangerous if you kept on doing things. It would make us down if you die or be confined forever by that piece of shit." His words weren't necessary but it was actually a worry tone for her, though he didn't change much on his normal accent. "You have slight anger issues also and without anyone around you can't control that. A kid like you should stay put instead." Before she can speak again, he was away, jumping and disappearing. The two horned dark oni gave her that fair warning and expected her to follow like that â€" since he was also worried, but cannot express it nicely.\_

\_ Aka got that, but deep inside, she was thinking of something else.\_

\* \* \*

><p>"I'm very sorry, Shiranui!" she said in a low tone, looking at herself on the reflection cast up on the blade. She's masking as Raion Shirabuki and she wishes that none of the three and her fiancÃ© would recognize her so she scooped her best and hid behind. After all, this was not expected and she doesn't want the three people she truly admires and love dearest be involved with her greatest mistake. Hiding herself with the wig and that man clothes had been easy for her, but on a foreign land, she felt scared on her own. She would usually be with Kazama, Shiranui, Amagiri nor even her fiancÃ© Iyori at times like this (though she avoids some circumstances because he was kind of annoying and possessive). She didn't spoke further and noted that she's still in the headquarters all around.</p>

She frowns because she cannot move freely but at least she has lost grasp from her 'cage' instead of waiting for the right time. She recalled of times the three would tell her to stay put and then wait because they're planning things, but she cannot wait further. It also involved somehow her rage which is something she cannot avoid and control yet. A Shirabuki demon's specialty is their anger, finesse and their strong powers, as if they were all accelerated in fast modes and requires proper calming; sometimes with the use of medicines or self control which requires a lot of concentration and consciousness. She felt so selfish she went away without caution and she's pretty sure that the cast of the Tenshi are being blamed by their prince. She feels super sorry, knowing that Iyori had attitude problems reminding her of one of the Shinsengumi Squad leaders again that was introduced. One of them looked like him and by the base of aura, might act a bit of him. She shivered to that thought and shook her head.

\_ 'I must disguise perfect here and keep myself.' \_ She promised that for awhile, and then returned the blade back at the small place. She was about to face another direction until she noticed a voice, and heard further more the footsteps with her sharp ears. An oni had powerful senses mere than humans and she's of full blood so this is legit to such like her.

She didn't move to that. Instead, she had her eyes fixed to the door, only to see a shadow of a person. The day went fast as she suspected, and now the moon shines bright signaling for something. As her

stomach grumbled silent only for her to understand, the person with the definite silhouette behind her door started to speak, which made her fully fix herself just to check if there are signs enough to recognize much that she's a girl (which she currently avoids). She also hoped that she didn't speak loud enough.

\_ "It's dinner time. Kondou-san asked me to pick you up here." \_

Raion (or Aka) blinked her eyes to the voice, trying to distinguish who spoke but got a few clues from the shadow â€“ the definite ponytail. She recalled that it was one of the Squad Leaders who had defended themselves from her break defense too and her sudden harmless attack, and most probably one of the people who got pissed of her attitude. She fidgets to that idea secretly and didn't continue to think of it further anymore, for she would just think hard. She stands up with the help of her blades as she placed it on her left side, with the obi in proper place.

The Squad leader who had been waiting impatiently almost screamed again with defiance, until he hears the door sliding casual and safe. There, he sees her who gave a meek poker face look and didn't respond to him, thinking that it wasn't necessary. Truth is, she cannot speak much of a guy but can act like one, and so she refrains from talking too much.

She figured out that it was the one with the same age as "hers" but she really didn't care much. Instead, she flashed a look and that made them both silent. After a fake cough, the male started to speak, holding on to his ponytail once thinking that being around her sent uneven chills even though it wasn't that cold tonight. He proceeded talking afterwards. "You're allowed to eat with us anyway, and don't think that we're imprisoning you or so."

"Of course." She responded firmly and then looked at the other male. For some reason, out of the blue, she changed the topic. "You're Heisuke, right?" she asked, making the Squad Leader blink and nod towards her. "â€œ I have yet to memorize your names if we're going on the same boat." She added.

Heisuke find that sudden questioning odd but to place it like that, pretty normal and fine. Though he felt that she's trying to speak, he didn't mind it much, still intimidated by her eyes and her hair, just like what Chizuru says: 'Kazama-like' in some sort of resemblance, and if there was a chance that she's just disguising and is a relative of that demon. For now, he played simple. "Right, so we should get dinner then." He added and walked a bit distant now, taking head on. For another unknown reason, he received a light chill down his spine; it was not because he was scared, but he felt something peculiar specifically with those captivating female â€“ ish eyes.

\_ 'Ughâ€œ|' \_ he thinks without any words to speak, but made sure that she was following. She wasn't even escaping and she didn't hold on to the defense position while they walk. This he have to thank despite the fact that they were debating earlier. He also took note of what Chizuru has spoken off earlier about the feeling and the eyes. Come to think of it, he did meet the person's eyes and felt the same thing, even if it was just mere seconds with the question. He gulped secret to that, not letting off guard and then spoke again. Knowing this person, he hated some silence when it wasn't needed. "Raion,

that is?" he said and continued further. "You were pretty good this morning, didn't expect someone like you to swing that early."

"Same to you." she responded, following him also in a gentle manner, as well as trying to maintain the manly voice on her own. "You managed to dodge one of the signature moves that I have been holding on to for years. The Shinsengumi are really commendable as Kondou-san says while he talks about you guys." She added.

"Eh? Our captain really is an open book â€“ however, do not abuse his good nature just because he owed his life to you."

"I'm not going to abuse himâ€| this is also for my own sake." This made him think of her words. "Kondou-san sure is stubborn no matter how much I pushed him away that timeâ€| but I appreciated your captain's company. If I would have left him like that, my conscience won't let me restâ€| her words weren't mythical but were of true feelings, making the male comment mental to that and think of her differently that time. "He reminds me of someone who was pretty in touch with me after all."

He didn't ask further for that but felt sorry more, as Chizuru's words of feeling echoed back on his head. \_'Chizuru-chan may be right about this thing after allâ€|'\_ even so the face and the physical can be of mere acting, so still the Squad Leader didn't nudge on caution. He brought up a bright smile instead and started off. "That's Kondou-san for you. He's always like that with the Shinsengumi after all and starting now you're going to eat dinner with us. Don't be afraid to talk or even rant in front of you has to, ne, Raion? I think we can be friends also."

"Friendsâ€|" she said and spoke. "That's nice, however I have been betrayed many times, so I don't think it's good if we get too closeâ€| it was a sad thing though and she was purposely distancing herself from them. The headquarters alone was the only thing she need just to hide and Kondou sheltering her also with the funds. This is why she just spaces out suddenly. "I have been attempted with murder many times myself so I find it hard to make friendsâ€|"

Heisuke cannot get what she wanted to say but he did feel sadness. He changed the topic quickly. "Oh, so anyway let's have our dinner. I bet they're grabbing the food already and if we get there late we won't have anything on our plate." When the point was given, he rushed already and was followed by the female in disguise, caught to slide the door afterwards.

\_ "What took you so long!?" \_

\_ "We thought you're out there again and sneak up on the brothel!" \_

"As if I would do that!" the grumpy Heisuke muttered, receiving the scolds of Sanosuke and Shinpachi directly after the slide of the door, their meals still steaming but the rest of the Squad Leaders keeping quiet. Chizuru fidgets to the noise again and continued to look at the other side, where Raion would walk next but in a slight shy manner, making her smile.

Kondou noticed that and looked. "Ah Raion, I thought you would decline now after that." He said and saw the male standing before the

sliding door, and continued to glance at her grateful also. "You can sit beside Saito since he's not really going to mind at all." He added in a welcoming approach.

"â€|" Raion kept silent. Just hearing Saito's name and then the face structure really makes her shiver, and stood there. "I can eat by myself if I want toâ€| you said that, Kondou-sensei." She said in a soft voice but normal. However, when she was about to speak up, Heisuke already pulled her down to sit, which kind of shocked her too much, making her eyes wide open. She didn't react to that with an offense though. "â€|!"

"Eh! Just sit down! Didn't we talk about this about few seconds ago!" he protested another but only to see the person forced to sit down beside Saito. "Nobody will bite you here nor hurt you if that's what you're so concerned of." He added correcting, and folded his arms again. "The Shinsengumi aren't that kind of people to attack within their group unless if there's a necessity. Oi, you get that?" he added more.

Shinpachi snickered. "For a minute there you made such sense, Heisuke!" he said and added a clap. "When did you learn to speak with some sense now, ah?" he praised with a tease, followed by Sanosuke's snicker and then the brown haired squad leader being incompetent and noisy. Of course Shinpachi and he were fighting again over the food this time.

Chizuru looked at the live dinner, making her smile but she noticed that the person beside her and Saito wasn't that pleased, still looking at the plate and then the chopsticks. "Uhm, Raion-san, is there something wrong with the food?" she asks making the others who weren't busy, look at the new recruit.

For a short while, watching Heisuke made Raion remembers of her best friend who would reason along with her complains. She wishes that she can speak further free but she knew that a wrong tone of her voice would be practically fail, so it's best to talk in low manners. She was a bit shy to that but didn't admit, finding it quite hard to maintain hiding her real gender. So far she believes that it was working and so she carried along with it. She blinked her eyes only to hear the only female talk and ask. "No." she speaks in her normal tone. "The food looks good anyway and soâ€| I shall eat it since I am hungry. I don't have any choice anyway, right?" she asked another, making Chizuru blink to her and then watches her get the chopsticks.

The brown haired female smiled and nodded. "Yes, of course."

Good thing they are getting along better now. Disregarding the noise of Shinpachi and Heisuke, Hijikata spoke direct towards her while she was taking a bite of the fish, noticing that her movements were awkward, minimal and somehow he figured that Saito was pretty uncomfortable for her. "You seem to be bothered eating with us then." He speaks with his normal tone. "Just like what Heisuke says, you're allowed to eat freely during meal times, and it was Kondou-san's say as well."

Sanosuke backed up the idea with a smile. "Well, we heard you don't get along with people that much because you were alone most of the time. We understand that you are still adjusting, but it's really

better to eat with a group than eating alone."

Raion was puzzled to that and didn't spoke for seconds, but then faced Kondou. "Hey, how much have you been telling me to your friends? This makes me embarrassed." She grunted with a low pout, surprisingly hearing the Shinsengumi captain chuckle to her reaction, her now biting her lip close and didn't recognize the awkward blush on her face. They noticed that even though there's only a lampshade. "Ah why you!" she muttered lower again, flushing red without notice.

Okita smirked to that. "You're blushing." He said pointing out on her. "You act like a girl. You are being gay." He added to the tease, and to think that it was a first dinner with the whole group. He was right that it made her feel uneasy again. "Come to think of it, your face resembles a girl for a bit."

"Haa?" Shinpachi paused and took a good look at her. "He doesn't look like a girl to me and a girl is not that flat." He added pointing at the body structure. "Okita, you're making your own illusions again. Chizuru-chan's the only girl in the Shinsengumi and Kondou-san didn't address him as a 'her' even once." He also speaks further, against with the other's words.

"Really? Then we have a shy sheep here. If he keeps that up, he'll get killed."

Heisuke gave the two the break. "Hey don't say things like that now." He said, recalling the answers from the previous conversation they had before they ate. He knew that she was feeling sad and somehow distant from her place but he couldn't go soft that easy. For now, he did a fake cough and then ate again. "Just eat up, Raion-san, you'll get used to this everyday now." He ended the sentence to that thing.

Raion listened vividly to that, but then proceeded on biting her food with a poker face, undefined if she should react to that, her mouth chewing along while she enjoys the food. The others found it pretty cute and feminine like in action but they didn't mind that, and instead, let her eat at ease. Kondou sighed of relief, slightly afraid that she might snap again like before (he saw her snap once) and it wasn't that good. Even so, the peaceful meal and the stomach grumble she held inside was inevitable, so she accepted company. \_It feels nostalgic already!\_ she thinks in steer silence, closing her eyes while she casually ate on proper manners, making Kondou chuckle a bit because he knew that she was still uncomfortable.

"You should start feeling like a member of the family like that way." Kondou added because he didn't want her silenced. "Don't keep secrets to yourself all the time! that's what Dr. Matsumoto would tell me whenever you're too distant."

She understands that but then looked away. "It feels weird being welcomed by foreigners. I'm not going to surprise if I would be hated around anyway." She spoke in a small tone, but didn't even look at them and dare face their eyes. For a moment, she held on her chopsticks tight, with such grip as she stiffens, recalling the times whenever she would complain and then kept confined in a place where Iyori can watch over her the whole day. She accidentally broke the chopsticks with her own force as she blinked and saw it broken.

"â€¡!" she looked at her hand and then had a blank fidget. "I didn't mean to do that, so-sorryâ€¡" she added lowering her head down.

Sanosuke had a spare chopstick pair so he handed it over. "You really are the 'oni' nicked wielder, eh? Awhile ago you sounded cocky and now you said 'sorry' you turned speechless." he says while he feels her taking the chopsticks in a queer manner. He hinted that her talking and her tone was changing slightly and wondered if she was sick but didn't ask for that at the moment. "We have a demon vice captain also so we understand."

She thought of that literally, blinking her eyes and then faced the person they were talking about. She did see a bit of that with just mere senses but appeared clueless to be safe. Hijikata grunted to the nickname though it was true, raising a brow with a scowl. "Bringing that now, Harada, you're not helpingâ€¡" he said but the red haired gentleman had a smile on his face.

"I'm just grateful you let me stay here. That's what I just know." Raion said standing correct to whatnot her beliefs are, but didn't smile to that. Her flashing eyes glanced about on the room, keeping everything nice and simple with her disguise. "I don't matter working as part of the Shinsengumi, just don't leave me abandoned out there now." She added, as if she had nowhere to go, but with the same face. Kondou had a small flashback when she said that, knowing that she had nowhere to go and she can be of great use.

\_ "As long as you're not causing trouble, it would be fine." \_

The voice came from Saito, who was near her since they were beside each other. He noticed also that she cannot look at him directly and she was avoiding contact with him but didn't mouth that over anymore. The group nodded with the Squad leader's response making her feelings relieved, though she had turned her head to eye at him. Somehow it reminded of Iyori badly â€" it's not that he had the exact image but there was this awkward instinct telling her that he's around and he's similar to this person. Saito didn't flash a bad look at her but she moved her head to face another direction and then saw her nod, starting to eat again.

"I'm sorry if I would bring this up as early as now, but I figured that we're in a groupâ€¡" Shinpachi said out of the blue and looked at the shy new recruit by the eye, telling her what they had discussed awhile ago. "You and Kondou-san have met, right? We would like to hear what you have to say and know about Yukimura Koudou. You see, Chizuru here is his daughter." He added, making the other female hope for answers.

Raion flashed a look at Chizuru. "You're Kodou's daughter?" she asked, looking at her from head to toe too, feeling a slight fidget inside her. When she scanned the person, she had suspicions and immediately confirmed that she was a demon just like her, but being with the humans was one thing that pushed her curiosity. She didn't tackle to that much and was conscious that she's supposed to answer on the question. "Koudou has been conducting a research about the 'water of life' which I have been strongly disapproving. When his inn was burnt down by the fire, I escaped by myself and turned a stray, knowing methods on how to live on the streets, and then I meet Kondou-sensei." She summarized it simple too.

Hijikata responded further. "You opposed this? But that means you know of the rasetsu (furies) that were products of ochimizu (water of life)." He earned a nod from her as he continued with his question properly. "Do you have any idea where he is now, and what else he would be doing before the departing?" he asked another hoping that she would respond properly again. They needed many facts as they need after all.

She shakes her head. "We are not that really close so I am sorry if I can't tell anything further than that. All I know is that he went missing and then I see rasetsu every visit. It should be clearedâ€œ those units shouldn't be scattering around town or even in the Shinsengumi itself. I was surprised you have a Rasetsu unit here and you managed to cope up with the day weather."

"Wait a minute, how did you know we have a Rasetsu unit?" Shinpachi continued with a brow raised. Even Heisuke paused eating because of that, since she wasn't introduced to Sannan yet.

"I noticed that Heisuke is a Rasetsu. I saw some rampaging rasetsu with the same uniform too."

Heisuke flinched. "Wait what? How did you? You haven't even seen my hair turn white yet.", he added and was really curious now, feeling a bit mysterious because of her answer, but she just gave a deadpan face and directly pointed at his head. "â€œ!?" he blinked his eyes seeing that lone finger pointing at his face.

"I have sharp eyes. I can see well.", she responded truthfully but didn't comment on that much. "You left a strand of your hair somewhere around your head and it didn't turn back to the original color because it has been removed." She explained in a most biological way, making the young Squad leader smirk with her keen observance. She didn't mind that but found her reason quite sensible. "I have encountered enough Rasetsu units myself so I know the feeling of being swarmed around. I used to have two people with me but they were killed by the Rasetsu, so I don't like being close to people."

Kondou didn't know that. "Eh? That I didn't know. However, I am sorry if it turned that way."

"That's why I request you, to have me as a lone member and allow me to move about by myself." She says in a most calm manner, not minding a lot of sense to her words. Even so, the group contradicts to that since she was feeling sad, and it was very noticeable. The blond female finished her meal after that talk. "Everyone calls me a 'monster' and I have been carrying that burden until now. I don't want any of the Shinsengumi to be called as 'monsters' just because they see me in the uniform. You don't seem like it despite the fact you keep those things."

There was strong silence to that, since her answer was quite to handle. However, things broke when Okita chuckled to it, and followed by the smiles of the Squad Leaders. Raion blinked her eyes, only to see the reaction of the men after saying that. She wasn't really joking but then she was puzzled with the faces.

Okita started off. "If you're worried about that simple thing, it's

not really a matter." He says.

"We're the Wolves of Mibu, so being called as 'monsters' and anything related to that seems all equal and the same." Sanosuke defended again along with the words of the Sword Saint. "I can't even stand your face like that~ it seems too inappropriate to wear some expression on your face."

"Really, Sanosuke, you're saying that you like guys now?"

"E-eh that's not what I mean!"

Chizuru smiled completely to that while she looks at Raion. She blinks suddenly seeing a smile form on the face. '\_He looks better and appropriate now that he smiledâ€|'\_ even that simple thing made also the other female smile. It was for seconds but the group recognized it. She was simply indulged with that.

The blond haired female was having the slightest reliefs for the count. Raion didn't notice the people seeing her form smiles on their faces also and then stopped another to that, making a fake cough. She didn't make any small commotions to that and spoke up instead.

"A-Anyway thank you for the meal." She said in another low tone and didn't look at them directly. "I'm not the type that would sneak up on conversations with the Squad Leaders so I am going to retire to bed earlyâ€|"

"Aw you're no fun." Shinpachi sighed with a ruffle on his hair. "We're not really going to talk much about things this night but proceed on patrol." He pointed out who was in charge for the night and it was Sanosuke who kept on looking at her thoroughly.

"If you insist, since you look tired from the trip." Kondou said and smiled again, understanding the situation.

"You can say that." Raion said with a small nod and then stood up, bringing her empty tray. "I don't mind bussing my own meal since you can't leave Chizuru-chan all the work." she added and looked at her which she confirmed is a full demon. '\_I wonder what a royal blood demon is doing on a place like thisâ€| Is these even a coincidence?'\_ she thought but didn't spoke much of that anymore. "The meal was delicious."

Chizuru looked at her directly too, flashing back the 'Kazama â€" like' appearance that they have been talking, however felt much comfortable since she was nice though she seems to be close. She thought that she would be given a stare the same as the demon after her, and the shocking information she has just gotten seem to bug her most of the time. Despite these, there was this feeling of trust, and far from the demon who was chasing her. She smiled and then nodded. "I'm glad you liked it."

"Oh glad you have manners after all." Shinpachi scoffed but still held on a grin while knowing that Heisuke would stand up and accompany her around. "Heisuke shall escort you the usual way since it was said on the rules, permitted by the vice â€" captain." he noted as the brown haired ponytail man stood beforehand and then watched the other open the door.

Kondou apologized to that. "Sorry if it came out a bit like thisâ€|

don't feel upset."

Raion shakes her head to that. "Nah, I will get used to this. It's just that I have to manage myself and the temperâ€!" she answered casually, feeling slightly at ease and then wanted to see the faces of her new comrades. "It proves that the Shinsengumi are really trustworthy. Good night, everyone." She said and bid before sliding the door to close, her hand still carrying her tray in a reckless guy-ish manner.

When she left, their faces turned to different moods.

"God, he really looked like the younger freak for seconds!" Shinpachi started again with a puzzled tone.

"I didn't expect to deal with a hard â€" to â€" read person." Sanosuke said with a slight sigh but still had a chirper mood. "Even earlier when I talked to him he wanted to be alone and then there goes the random words of respect and snappingâ€! what is this guy." He added with fidgets but found out that the face she made was thoroughly cute. "Though, I seriously found that smile quite true and happy."

"Heisuke seemed defensive so I don't think there's nothing wrong at all." Shinpachi added, only to look at the other comrades who were silenced. He faced Chizuru first. "Ne, Chizuru, what do you think of it now?" he asked, knowing that her perspectives are far natural and normal than the rest they have here.

"He seems to be honest to meâ€!" she commented after being asked, having the smile. "I didn't feel that she has a demon sense in her though she was pushing away hard non-verbally. Raion-san seems to act natural after all." She added, but it wasn't enough to convince the rest to it since it was a first meeting.

Hijikata kept to his position. "I'm still suspecting that guy and I shall have Heisuke watch over him still."

"I plan to allow him on patrols sooner, and since you all agreed that he can have a uniform, he'd be wearing one despite warning his nickname." Kondou said while he smiles, making Hijikata pause to his decision, which was all too sudden. He knew the face that the vice captain would give but he did trust the kid. "Chizuru-chan was taken before, and I think this should follow the same process as well. So far, Raion is a skilled weapon wielder. You have already witnessed it early this morning."

"But having the foreigner do that job fasterâ€! are you getting soft on new recruits now, Kondou-san?"

"I think it's kind of fun after all. We can just kill him if he opposes." Okita said with a smile and then turned his head to look at Saito who was all silent and observing. He knew that the person was with fewer words but just to make sure, he was all sensible.

"Hajime-kun, what do you think of this?"

"I will follow what the captain and the vice â€" captain would command." Saito said with a blank tone, finishing his drink also. Somehow inside him, he feels that the stare and avoidance while seeing his face wasn't really that necessary, and he wondered why

amongst the faces that the new recruit has seen, he was the one most avoided. He felt like he did something horrible to him, but didn't show further action to that. Instead, he just calmed on and thought little, leaving the group to discuss further.

\* \* \*

><p>Heisuke had 'escorted' her to her room again and even watched her slide the door. For minutes he did observe but then had a funny thought since her actions were feminine. He blinked to that, knowing that Raion is a guy and that actions weren't the base of everything and all. He gulped to that again while she wasn't facing.</p>

\_ "Heisuke, thank you. Good night." \_

He heard her reply to that, even seeing her sit and set up the futon. He had been pretty curious with it for some unknown reason himself, like he wanted to watch him in her sleep but felt slight awkward to that. He's tasked to watch over her, but he nodded first. "Mm, Raion-san. Good night." He thought that it was fair, and then slid the door. He had the slightest feeling that the Shinsengumi didn't only take in a weird member but one whom he would think of as a woman in some terms. He broke to that, only setting his mind that Chizuru is the only girl around their group, and only her.

The moon gave off a beautiful glow, as it passed through some parts of his cheeks and his eyes glowing to the midst, thinking if he should venture on the other side of his dreams. Every Squad leader has its own dreams, thus followed merely to climb to the top. The brown haired man believed that the next days wouldn't be much of a joke anymore, and the battles were getting tougher.

## 7. 00x CHAPTER 6

\*\*akaxgan\*\* \_says...\_ Prepare yourselves for a Shiranui from the game /o/ since he's not thoroughly exposed much on Hakuouki otome and the anime himself (and since I really love this guy's attitude alot 3) I have given him a role of exposure. Yes, he plays a great role in my fanfic. .b I went slightly on his exaggeration for a bit but based on several fanfictions that have been posted here and viewed, also with some research, I think Shiranui's really an exaggerated foul mouthed guy, though he's semi - tsundere /o/. This is one of the shortest chapters too since I have moments with the Baka Trio separated with Raion/Aka, Iyori and the Shinsengumi -to refrain very lengthy chapter disturbances-. Anyway, here you go!

\* \* \*

><p><em>"Kazama! What the fuck did I just heard!?"</em>

Kazama slashed on some enemies with the use of his blade, being irritated with the other's voice simply because he was nearer and it was hurting his eardrums. He cannot drop to this instant but then, he cannot ignore it. "Shiranui, you sound like an idiot." He said in a sluggish tone, and continued to slash his blade quicker to those who were fending off, technically some Rasetsu that broke loose.

Shiranui was still on a grunting state, having his silver bullets charged on the revolver that he was holding. He loved his weapon too much he went overboard, causing lots of gunshots along with his pissed emotion, after hearing some news. He went at the blond royal blood oni's back as he shot other enemies that were scattered attacking them. "You son of a bitch, you're letting this slide?" he questioned another with a high tone, this time, Amagiri on the front line and then hitting with the use of his fists.

"Of course I am not." He was deadpanned on what he heard, and then suffered a little with the foul language. He didn't like the attitude of his comrade who has been thoroughly loyal to him too. He too held on to the news since he was far concerned and responsible. What made him unhappy is that it happened last two years and he had just have known it for about weeks ago. He knocked the anger off his enemies if it was even helping some.

"That bitch is going to die on her own!" he protested further just to get through the skull of the royal blood oni, making him feel conscience, at least once, inside the cold nature. So far the black oni was far concerned and worried despite being brutal at the moment, his face not wearing a huge grin for the kill count but of disappointment. \_'I told her to behave and wait back there! She's been missing for two years already and the Tenshi clan is also on the move after her escape? \_He continued to shoot madly trying to calm his senses. He was so irritated.

Amagiri knew how much Shiranui was concerned with the person, and decided to have his own words spoke. "Aka oujou-sama isn't that weak to handle herself." He said, hoping that it can calm the other around. He has always been the 'eldest' and the one who memorized the actions of his friends for too long, knowing that this isn't once happening.

The sword slash done by Kazama interrupted to that. "I am disappointed that I heard of this a few weeks ago and wasn't informed that it was old news." He hated being late for things, and now that Aka was missing; he knew that Iyori wouldn't stop to that, and bring her back. It wasn't really troublesome but knowing that the girl would escape just to free her self from the 'closed prison' is the big problem. \_'What was she thinking doing something reckless and on her own?' \_ He didn't show much that he was concerned but he was held too responsible because he's a 'relative'.

"Disappointed my ass, I'm going dipshit here!" Shiranui protested again and then loaded another of his bullet packs. He was actually frowning and even if he got the stares of the two saying 'You're-overreacting-and-panicking-' mode he begged to differ, his face creating such looks. His voice was even raised further and they got used to him. He wasn't normally like that except when he's worrying after Akaâ€| that's sure.

"Stop acting tough and obsessive over another idiot, as if you're the husband."

"That's not what I mean!" with that response, he became much irritated to Kazama but somehow he sees some concern over the demon lord. To begin with, Kazama \_is\_ Aka's 'big brother' as she idolizes him and she was now alone, but thank goodness she was not with her fiancÃ©. That would make it practically no laughing matter to the

best friend, which is why he was getting shivers down his spine. He wasn't worried of Iyori's anger issues but more of the humans and the princess being alone.

The blond oni knew much that he wasn't the only one worried here. He also knew that Shiranui was just acting tough but deep inside he's thinking of her safety (that's how he memorized the brute) indecisive as always. He ignored him and then delivered another one of his strong slashes, making the final move. The bloodshed was too oblivious they left a trail pool of red. He didn't matter to that much, but withdraws his weapon as much as the other two demons would withdraw with their offense.

The dark oni didn't keep his calm but had a pissed look more. "Shoot, if that Tenshi bastard gets to her first, we won't be allowed to see that woman again and he'd probably kill our ass and our kind more sparing that one only." It wasn't only her, but also the other oni that chose to scatter and oppose the war, hiding them selves so they can just mingle with humans. He places his weapon back at the case and then continued talking. "What the hell has been happening and things were getting faster, but the news too lateâ€|" he grumbled under his breath but felt Amagiri's hand on his shoulder, turning his head to see the other tall oni.

Amagiri spoke calm as usual. "If you keep on worrying like that, Shiranui, the princess wouldn't like to see you. You are getting exaggerated more than the brother was concerned." He says, speaking of Kazama who stood silent thinking. "Kazama, what now, after hearing that?"

The blond oni sighed in a casual manner. "That girl won't die easilyâ€| so we're here for two reasons nowâ€|"

"I don't give a fuck with the mate you're looking for, just steal her away." Shiranui protested but was far much thinking of the princess' location instead, though he leans his body on one free tree, still disappointed. "After taking that Yukimura, searching for that bitch is pretty important." He stressed, referring to Aka.

"I know that, so stop having a complex with a noble demon. It sickens me."

"I'm not having possessiveness issues like Iyori!" his face raged again, contradicting to the cooler look of their leader. "What makes you think that I love that woman anyway?" he grunted lower with frustration, only to see the faces of the two nonverbally saying that he already has the answers to that. He didn't give a damn to that and ignored it instead.

"If she were to leave, where can she possible leave to then?" Amagiri questioned the two, first setting for the location, but then Shiranui winced on that idea and grunted more, feeling much nervous than ever (though he doesn't really admit). Because of that reaction, he faced Kazama instead who was still thinking about.

"She would be here, as I would concludeâ€| after all, she did ask me if she can come here alongâ€|" Kazama bluntly responded.

"Great, so we're going to look all over as if we can finish it for a whole night, Kazama." Shiranui began again, making the blond pissed.

They usually have fights over this thing and the denial with closure but then the two were always calmed down by Amagiri being the tallest and elder demon himself. Kazama goes with the dead look stare telling the dark oni to stop acting like a husband because it's pathetic and he's not qualified with her status, just like a usual boss would do, getting him angry again.

"Let's get that Yukimura chick within the dogs quickly as if I can wait then." Shiranui protested with an imaginary angry vein raised on top of his head, still concerned so far with happenings and things such as this. Somehow he would feel so unstable whenever he would sense trouble for Aka, even if he denies it. "I don't care where they're staying but I hate it. A battle with that Harada would be refreshing also."

On the contrary to action, Kazama acted as if nothing happened, but pissed. Aside from the fact that women are valuable and the woman who was missing is his 'sister', he felt trouble not only for him but also for almost half of the oni clan. They wish not to mess with the Tenshi and Shirabuki affairs but they were already included. The blond oni has to endure also the 'negative preaching' of the best friend complex after all, since this is how their friendship started along with the ruling.

## 8. 00x CHAPTER 7

Raion's stay with the Shinsengumi continued to develop, as she kept distant yet of good use to them, making her feel complete. She was always confined inside with only the three to sympathize with her, and then followed by Senhime, Kimigiku and Kaoru Nagumo (Iyori's best friend despite the age gap). They were a small group, but this time, she's disguised and she's dealing with more than just males. She felt comfortable because she was guy-ish herself and didn't really care much on the accordion of things. As long as she would be of service to them, she would be fine.

The members held off and decided not to talk about the demons with her since she was still adjusting, though it seems like it took some mere time. She was really helpful as a messenger and then a helper of Chizuru. She also was allowed to participate on some sparring practices but on lighter sides since she chose not to use her blades for killing intents accidentally. Because of this, even the normal members were thankful that she understands, despite the distant attitude again.

\*\*\_Slash!\_\*

There was a sword slash on the other side again, Raion being alone in the area. She knew it was the perfect time where she can practice on her own, this time, using a blade that can kill without hesitation. She breathes quiet, contented that no one was watching since they were on patrol with Heisuke and Chizuru lead on. Somehow, the quiet feeling leaves her to an empty dimension, but she prefers it that way, reflecting on her own deeds. She is still a pureblood oni and she knew much how scary she can be, that is why she kept on practicing for it.

She pulled her first sword casually and safe which appeared to be far shorter than the other two on her waist. It appeared to be very

dangerous swords that have been passed over to her. She knew little of that to be honest. Even so, the shortest while matters and two years was no joke, being alone. Somehow, she can pride off that she managed to survive without luxury and company, learning it the stray way. So far it was one of her horrible experiences but she didn't wish to continue with that further.

She moved with such grace, as if she was holding two fans and then proceeded on slashing along the wind. She used to do that too back on their homes and remembered times where Kazama would tease her so she can charge further and then end up holding his hand for assistance. Shiranui would charge her bullets helplessly to increase her agility and for saint issues, there was Amagiri who gave her the knowledge and things far important aside from her life. She enjoyed singing whenever the three would just halt her reasoning that she's noisy and losing focus, but they were actually listening to her sweet voice. Those things were irreplaceable.

That short thing made her miss them again, but at the same time hurt her feelings because she cannot see them again. Her mistake was not false but a big issue, and she tried her best to keep up with the Shinsengumi and stop the Rasetsu, while hiding with either the Tenshi clan members or the demons that knew of her or served under her. She thinks that this is some weakness that she shouldn't be thinking, but the misery of those memories kept her really sad. Even if the Shinsengumi looked welcoming and that she knows that Chizuru is a demon, she still felt so empty.

Unknowingly, she was swinging her sword in an unconscious state, drowned by the thoughts she has in her head. It wasn't normal for her to have her thoughts fly upward like that but then it wasn't good too. She barely heard footsteps because her arm kept on swinging, and little did she realize that her closed eyes and her consciousness almost hit an open blade to the other wielder.

The other person who appeared before her and knew of her sudden location had the same blank face, and knew that she was thinking too deep based on her hand movement. She wasn't even concentrating but he kept himself there just to watch and wait for her to react. After a few seconds of opening her eyes, she was flustered with the appearance and then followed by a back slide, a few inches far away from him, holding on her weapon.

The blond female gulped little but didn't psych much. Instead, she had run out of words, simply seeing the male whom she is avoiding around the Shinsengumi for such reasons. Her red eyes were full since they were occupied with his image, and too bad no one else is there but the two. Free time isn't really that free around the Shinsengumi to begin with.

The male spoke firm. "Swinging your sword like that is reckless." He says.

She can remember his name well, but doubts address him for it. However, she promised to be good. "I didn't know you were here, Hajime-san." She started and closed her eyes while she places the blades near her. "I do this all the time, and I think its fineâ€|" she added while she confirmed to her style, knowing that it wasn't Iyori she's talking to. Somehow, it felt Iyori â€" ish to her. She couldn't complain further to that.

Saito had a neutral look. '\_Hajime-san?' \_he thinks. He really didn't bother her, but then forwarded and asked something out of the blue. "I noticed something whenever you look at us." He says, making her ears open. "What have I done to you?" he simply asked in a blunt and monotonous manner, only to give her a look that concerns their relationship as co-workers.

"What do you mean?" she questions like she didn't know.

He practically was straightforward with these sorts of situations. "I can tell that you have something with me based on the look of your eyes." He says, making the first point. "It is not that much of a concern but I do not like making any member of the Shinsengumi feel at debt or uneasy. This is a hindrance with the job." He added, making the job an alternative excuse since he wanted to know what was really inside her head.

She didn't spoke for that some minutes, taking her time to think of words, but this came out. "Sorry." She speaks with her lips curled a bit, and then looked at him. "Youâ€| you remind me of someone who I am avoiding." She stated while she closes her eyes. "His hair, his eyes and the feelingâ€| I feel something the same on you. I hate to admit it, I was scared of the person." She added another, making the Squad Leader listen to her more.

He blinked to that. "I see. It must be painful remembering those. I apologize."

"No, no, no, you don't have to apologize." She spoke while she shakes her head a little and then felt much embarrassed with Saito. "I should be the one sorry acting like I don't see you, and then you ask me this. I am really a failureâ€|"

He shakes his head. "I understand that. I won't ask further why a lady like you would dress on male's clothes as well."

\_ 'How did he knew that I was a girl!?' \_this made her gulp, but then she remained silent for the same seconds only to think whatnot to do with him. She can actually kill him with just her talent but she cannot for he's a good fellow; Even though he resembles a person she is avoiding, he's still a member of the Shinsengumi and he's not an oni. "â€|Are you going to rat me out then, Hajime-san?" she asked, hoping that he wouldn't.

"If you insist, but I don't see a reason why I should at the moment."

"You have nice eyes, being able to see through my disguise. I hope not everyone knew of thisâ€| I would be awkward, and Kondou-san would be mad at me againâ€|" she spoke as if she's too worried with the rules of the Shinsengumi itself. "I promise not to do anything reckless and I don't like anyone being harmed because of meâ€| that is why I kept distant further." she added, being at least in ease because she was discovered and the guy seemed honest.

He didn't know what to say to that for awhile, as his eyes glanced quiet at her blade, herself and then on the background. "I don't know much about you and I don't see you as a threat anyhow. You behaved evenly even if people didn't watch over you, and Yukimura said that

you're deeming honest in your ways." He says; just to make her clear and a bit comfortable. "It seems that your stay here is fine with the others."

"Chizuru said that? I guessâ€|" she said with a sigh but then wishes to know something. "May I ask then? How long have you known that I am a girl? Is my disguise that bad you got through me?" she asked, not knowing that Chizuru asked the same thing before when she met Senhime.

He glanced at her. "No. Your actions spoke of it yourself, andâ€|" he says while he looks at the side. "â€|I discovered by accident. I unintentionally saw you binding yourself while biting on to something to lessen the noise you're making." He added making her flush red, but he closed his eyes to that already and then responded towards her. "I didn't see anything but your back."

"If that's the case, then why didn't you tell anyone?"

"When you speak, I can see that your purpose here is not to kill us nor investigate no matter how I conclude. I am not sure if some of the Squad Leaders knew and were just keeping it to themselves."

She frowned to that. "This is bad then, but I don't like hurting people that way." She gave off a small smirk and then completely looked at her blade. "I thank you thoughâ€| since you kept watch and decided not to spread this, keeping this a secret. I'm sorry also if I kept on avoiding you though you never did anything at all."

That's where he wondered. "You're scared of this person who resembles me, as you say?" he received a small nod from her but he sighed to that and pulled on his sword case quiet. She thought that he'd be mad and prepared in a false manner but he didn't show any threat to her. Instead, he looked at her part shaking hands. Her feelings felt twisted on how he looked as he wanted to ask, but decided not to for it was none of his business. He draws out his blade then, thinking of another idea but stood distant. "If that's the case, drawing my blade to you is already a threat. Thenâ€| attack me as you desire."

She took some time to look at him and his blade before she hears him speak. "Wait, attack you?" she questioned, cocking a brow as she looked at him again. "Why should I, Hajime-san? This isn't even appropriateâ€|" she mumbled under her breath and then looked at her sword case while closing her eyes for some seconds.

"Kondou-san said you have been keeping things to yourself most of the time. It must be painful. It's about time you let it out." His answer was absolute making her face him again.

By the tone of his voice, it seems that he was pretty serious. It was just both of them who were in the area, and he was giving her the impression of letting it out on him with sparring. She recalled that he is the best swordsman around along with Okita, Shinpachi and Hijikata within the Shinsengumi and his blades were sharper than anyone else. It also helped to her conclusion that he had some features similar to Iyori, giving her a reason to attack more. Her feelings are indifferent: half of her was annoyed with the fiancÃ© because he was too desperate, but at the same time, half of her was sorry because she caused too much problems, making the fiancÃ© suffer. That simple mixture inside her felt blasphemy for some

seconds, before she decided to draw out her longer blade instead of the shorter one or the weird one.

"I'm going at you with feelings then!" she said in a simple tone. "I will try not to hurt anything of you, for what I would do depends on how much I have been keeping for awhile; so I will apologize early." She earned a simple nod to that.

Saito could see her weapon cases and their sizes and simply accepted anything that she would draw with the use of her hands. He looked at the long blade which she picked, knowing that it had some meaning yet he'd discover. He's pretty interested with any kind of blade but he was fine with it as he thinks. He didn't move to his place and remained blank there, receiving a first blow from her. He was pushed back a little with her advance, since he said that she shouldn't be holding back. He didn't talk to that and defended himself too, thinking that this is a spar and the only difference is that she's bringing out some of her burden.

Like she said, she's drawing out her attacks not with push by the power of her oppressed feelings and emotions that were driven crazy inside her. She looked frustrated to that, still giving her blows while the male would exchange to her. She sees him as Iyori at the moment and then gritted her teeth, still holding on to her half side feelings (of annoyance and sorrow that is). She thought that it was okay because evenly as said, Saito didn't really mind, and she can go rant on him nonverbally through a spar, as she went a bit frenzy.

When he noticed that she was moving faster and that she kept on hitting the blade and then aiming at him subconsciously, he also made his sparring more of a warrior's style. This doesn't look like a safe game to play but this was his proposal, so he would continue with it. This is where he felt sympathy with what she is drawing out. He can feel her anger, her sadness and the blade was severely passing vibrations on him and his sword but he didn't give a blow to that. The two of them looked like enemies for some cause. '\_So this is what she has been feeling!' I can tell that it is horrible!\_' he thinks quiet still on the 'spar'.

The male was also attacking her and eventually she would evade his blades. This is a 'spar' after all, with some feelings, but she prevented to cry. Her face suddenly gave a 'poker face' look because it was part of her small hysteria. Their blades were creating a rhythm both annoying and pleasant to the ears; Saito dodges her double swing and forwarded for a stab, but Raion defended herself with the use of her blade and moving to the side to bend while touching on the ground for awhile.

Still wearing that poker face while having the sad look on the eyes, the raven haired male with a scarf and a ponytail helped her up delivering more slashes and her evasion, and then followed by speed dodges. It didn't look like a spar but a battle of best swordsmen. Every minute spent felt like monstrosity to those who would recognize the real meaning of 'spar'. This is set to be like this anyhow, since Raion is a female oni to begin with, and there are times that her strength is uncontrollable.

However, she didn't allow her rage to mix along and hid her real face behind, since it would be safer that way. She was convinced that the

male in front of her offering her a 'shoulder' indecisively didn't found that out, knowing that she's still half safe on his eyes. She just swung with her most moves, even with the signature moves, until they had a moment of sword clashing, their faces a bit close to each other.

She remembered not to show her oni appearance towards him, but she was drowned with all the things that she was keeping. She felt so alone despite the fact that days in the Shinsengumi were present and thoroughly happy with the background. Yes, there were fights which she kept on being used to but every free time meant something really valuable. She didn't open up much on them and wore the same façade so she won't be discovered, however, Chizuru would always discover her but didn't know of her real gender. She blended like the water towards the group, and felt the happiness apart. Still, she's an oni and knowing that these are people, they dislike them. Even if the group were keeping rasetsu units around, they still 'loathe' demons.

They continued the 'sparring' like it wouldn't end. Saito almost hit her with one of his blows but she did dodge immediately with her reflexes. He can comment on her skills later on but he let her finish all what she has. He still wore the neutral face most because he's not a man full of words but shows compassion on simple manners. Just as they were still there, their swords dancing and making the sounds, some of the Shinsengumi members overheard them, and started to walk towards their location.

Okita was quietly walking on the side, after being amused from afar, seeing the clashing of the blades and that the two were on a spar. He has been loving things like that since then, but this was new. Since Raion doesn't come out of the headquarters unlike Chizuru who was free, she doesn't fight despite having the talent. It has been quite long too that he hasn't seen her move her blade (or actually see her practice since she's always tucked up on her room) and then her movement. He really didn't mind and he knew that the two were busy concentrating on each other; they didn't recognize his presence through words yet.

Saito moved accordingly while he allowed her to hit him more and so far they weren't hurting each other. There were rips on their kimono, but it wasn't that much of a problem as long as they didn't have wounds. Their sword fight stopped the moment someone talked, obviously from one of the Shinsengumi members. Both of them halted in the middle of the second sword clash, eying on the unexpected visitor.

The person spoke soft. "Saito-san, Shirabuki-san, I thought I heard a feud." He said, his tone a bit worried but then it went off for awhile, his eyes staring more at them. They looked like they were fighting based on several rips on their clothes.

"You're no fun, Gen-san." Okita finally spoke, who took some time in silence. He pouted a little and gave a false reply. "I was still enjoying both of them killing each other." He added, making the elder one look with a fidget.

Saito immediately changed that and withdraw, as well as the female in front of him. He knew that they were supposed to be the only people but they were thoroughly discovered, probably because of the sword

clashes. "It was just a spar." He clearly informs while watching the first Squad Leader smirk with a shrug. "There is no feud between us." He added another just to clarify the false words of the sadistic person before them, making Raion blink and recognize the mistake.

The blond female placed her sword back too, also looking at them and then replied. "If you were disturbed with our practice, then I am sorry. It was my fault." She said altering her voice a little, which was recognizable by the silent sparring partner before, and then faced him. "Oh greatâ€œ! our clothes have slashes." She added another with quite a frown, and then realized that she went overboard too.

He shakes his head calm and then faced her. "Don't mind about this, at least no injury was caused. You have good skills. Your teacher should be proud of you." he added and then closed his eyes, relieved that his scarf wasn't damaged. "You went a bit overboard though, for some minutes."

She apologized to that immediately. "I told you." she muttered, feeling ashamed. "This is the reason why I don't like grouping closerâ€œ!"

"Ah really? But you did great." Okita added, making her look at him, while he smiles. "You weren't exactly the 'monster' I was picturing but it's probably the exaggerated reactions of the people who saw you instead." He says another while he started to walk thoroughly near them and then faced the elder for some seconds. "Gen-san, I think the others need you there. No one's watching over the other groupâ€œ! will you?" he asked.

Gensaburou blinked his eyes after hearing that. "O-Of course, I didn't thought of that earlier." He responded swift and then started to walk casual and normal, away from the three.

The sooner the elder leader leaves, the better they are. Raion looked at the taller guys and then faced them straight. "I don't have any more reason to stay here then. I'll do the chores since Chizuru-chan isn't around." She added, quickly reverting and then proceeded to walk, but was blocked by Okita. "â€œ|Souji-san, you're on the way."

"You're already in a hurry just because you saw me?" he asked and questioned, then eyed at Saito. "Seems to me Hajime -kun and you are getting along better. How long has it been?" he added with another source of tease, making her blink her red eyes towards him and speechless, but also trying to figure out an answer.

"It's not like that." She defended with a small grunt, showing off annoyance which made him much amused again.

"Everyone should get along." Saito said, at least to defend her answer, making him face the other male. "Okita, what are you doing loitering around the headquarters?" he questioned further, and had a feeling that before anything else, he had been watching. He just hopes that this isn't one of the schemes that he's thinking.

Okita smirked. "I easily get bored when I sit there and simply stay put." He defended along and then smiled also. "Plusâ€œ! I think I

wanted to talk to Raion-san for awhile."

She wanted to growl to this, but she didn't because she has no reason forward. Whatever that is, she's well informed that Okita is a sadist and that he's one of the Shinsengumi members who had numerous kill counts. She took some time analyzing every leader herself despite being most silent instead, and had a hard time dealing with things because of her secrets. \_'I hope he's not going to ask for something stupid.' \_ She thinks and wishes a lot inside her head, but the green eyes of the Squad Leader seemed dangerous.

\_ "So, Raion, why do you present yourself as a guy?" \_

Her prayers weren't answered for real, as she gasped in the quiet manners. "Tch, not you tooâ€!" she said in a worried sigh, also seeing Saito in his neutral look. "Looks like you're right, Hajime-san. Some members knewâ€!" she mumbled in a troubled voice also, pressing her fingers on her forehead for awhile, but then saw Okita smile another, but this time, he's being curious.

"It cannot be helped." Saito said in a blunt tone, knowing the person.

"Hajime-kun also knew? Oh how evil." Okita answered. "I knew you were a woman the day you were introduced. How couldn't I? When Chizuru-chan was taken here, she disguised herself as a guy and then told of her intentions clear. Yours weren't that different, except that you're quite extraordinary having the skill of killing." He speaks with a shrug and a pleasant voice. "I see that's the reason why you speak minimal and wishes to be alone most of the time."

Raion grunted to that. "You ask too much, now that you know." She was disappointed and flushing pink of embarrassment because she doesn't want to be discovered. "I was true to words when I spoke of being alone and everything back there â€" I don't have intentions. I just don't want to break Kondou-sensei's rules in the Shinsengumi andâ€! I fail as a woman anyway. I'm brutal." She added another which made her frown in small times, but shuddered that away. "I'm trying to blend with you guys but you make it difficult for me now."

"It's not my fault~" he hummed little. "I don't see anything wrong with telling the truth to everyone, as if you'll get killed. I only suspect that Sano, Shinpatchi and Heisuke would probably feel awkward since you've been bickered by them." He thought quiet of their faces because they don't really shout and get angry with women. "Are you afraid that they'll do something to you?"

"No." she stressed more. "I've encountered buffed men wilder than you guys so I don't have a problem with that. I just have to keep myself minimal. That's all." She added queer. "Its okay if you keep on doubting me but all I ask is for you to keep our secret and then forget it." That was the words of the female, now worried that both Squad Leaders already knew of her real gender. She gave a look towards him.

He grinned. "What if I tell them, alright?"

"You wish to die?" she questioned further, with a sly smile though inside she's burning hate. \_'Oh I knew there's something hateful of

this man! I wish I can kick him now.' \_She grunted lower more, and further.

"Sounds fun to meâ€|" he said with a grin, making her upset more.  
"Butâ€| I won't kill you \_yet\_. You have good use for Kondou-san and I don't like to do anything offensive towards him."

"â€| Yeah right, nice reasoning." She muttered towards him, but practically relieved that he didn't pushed forward. She just fidgets more when she knew that the guy was playing a mean joke to her, and that his intentions were just to twist her thoughts for a moment, also by the look of him and Saito's eyes. \_'These people are far deceiving than I thoughtâ€|' \_she thinks clear yet in a worried manner, but didn't show that to the two taller males before him. She didn't even draw out a sword. "Thanks for being a gentleman."

"I'm not acting nice on you, take note of that." He corrected and still retained that look. "It doesn't change the fact that I am keeping an eye on you, and so as Hajime-kun." He added more, making it too convincing that her secret can only be exposed by the two.

Saito managed to back up on that small. "I'm not going to do anything inappropriate unlike you, Okita."

"O-ho? Are you defending Raion-san now?"

"I only do what is needed and what's right."

"Fine, fine." Raion said blocking them, since she had the feeling that the two were 'friends' but in different terms, making the males look at her. "I won't do anything so you're just wasting your time. I'm going to do Chizuru-chan's chores." She stated and then started to walk, but earned a little flush of embarrassment again, still not trusting the sadist Squad Leader. \_'I'm going away like I didn't meet that guyâ€| I am not helping and so as heâ€|' \_she thinks vivid, fast and quiet but then had minimal, gentle walks.

For a moment, she stopped walking, lifting her head up and didn't face back. "Thanks for the spar, Hajime-san. I will pay you back with a new robeâ€|" she said like she promised, waving a hand casually but small, and then left as she did most of the time with mere avoidance, wishing to be alone and rather do the chores. She felt as true as a woman this time, but didn't spoke further to that.

Saito blinked to that, but didn't respond on it much anymore. He has nothing to respond to her but watched her leave harmless.

"Do you trust that person?"

"Unidentified yet." He responded towards Okita and closed his eyes, looking at his blade as he withdraws and then saw the slashes of the blade. He recalled of her moves and her gritting of the teeth, while she fights blowing her emotions in the spar, also making the other squad leader stare at him for seconds before he moved again.

Okita smirked. "Oh well, since you said so. However you're not going out with your robe like that, right?" he pointed out on the Shinsengumi trademark, but snickered small. "To think that a girl can do much on you that wayâ€| she's far worst than Chizuru-chan then."

He also did recall when Chizuru charged at him first but she almost killed her.

He considered that nothing but gave a poker face towards him. "She's going to get me a new one." He said blank as ever, only seeing the other one shrug unsure. He still thinks that she's no normal girl at all, and for some seconds, she really moved like an enraged demon.

#### 9. 00x CHAPTER 8

\*\*akaxgan \*\*\*\*\_says...\_\*\*Wew! Senhime has a surprise here, and like I told you, the demons with both my OC couple are related and will have several attitude changes accordingly (but not OOC so please don't worry). I finally made Iyori's sexy bath exposure 8D yes! Anyway, here you go! 3

\* \* \*

><p><em>On the other side of things...<em>

The warm mist made the large pool slightly foggy, the waters making gentle ripples and the flowers that were floating along moving with minimal waves. One lotus stops and was blocked by a fair colored thing, which happened to be one of the knees of a certain bathing person. Going nearer, the fog fades flawless, just like a mere entrance of a presenting actor, clearing more just to give a better view of a handsome fair face, eyes closed and long raven hair flowing along with the water that drops endless. Rocks were also designed thoroughly as such as the scenery looked like a smaller version of a waterfall, with several hinges of gold designs.

The male opened his eyes slowly after feeling the paused lotus, lifting his head up while he hears the sensible water making sounds. He sits up rationally and gentle to support himself, and had a blurred vision for some seconds, until his eyes of teal blue revealed quite a sparkle. He continued to adjust himself firmly before he moves his arm slow, scooping up the object that disturbed him. To his eyes, the lotus reminded him of something, even if he just woke up from a short nap. The prince continued to look at it with his normal face, ever monotone and didn't wear a smile.

One of his subjects walked inside his royal bath since he gave forward permission towards them, and trusted them despite the punishments. The subject was dressed of the royal quality but was originally part of the Northern oni council. \_"Iyori-sama, your meal is ready." \_It said in the most gracious manners, for a wrong move would be upsetting.

The prince called 'Iyori' didn't look at him, like he actually ignored. After hearing what the person has to say, he already asked another one of the usual questions. "Have you found Aka?" He completely ignored what was said, and sometimes wouldn't even matter about his health and his food.

The subject paused and gulped. "Umâ€|" he knew that this question would always be asked, but so far, there isn't any progress.

"Two years and running, my wife is missing. I don't like that." The

young prince noted in his monotone voice, though he was practically having a bad mood stirred up inside him. He didn't like her getting out of his sight and his obsession was far getting worst; not even his parents can stop him and had no choice but to allow him to do anything he desires, for there was a point that their clan would benefit large if they were married and to mate stronger demons. He can see the subject fearing a bit of him as he glanced now, his eyes moving sharply yet with definite finesse to the side, seeing him.  
"What are the counsel doing letting this slide?"

"It's not that easy to find the princess of the West, ouji-sama. Everyone is doing their best to look for her."

He remained frail and blank to this, but had his temper calmed down. He knew that anything he'd do won't help him at the moment, but the truth is he was already tempted to slash on to something again, but took note that the oni aren't really play things. There were a few of them already and he kept on insisting over this. He didn't wonder why, only knowing that he doesn't like what's his to be wandering around without his consult or him to watch through.

"B-but everything shall do fine once she is found. She'll never escape from you for sure."

He peered a little. "I have heard of the same line multiple times anew after I ask." He corrected, making the other one shiver again, and him standing on his bath, the water dropping on his seemingly slim body and his hair strands wet from the water. He took the piece of cloth from the subject and wore a monotone face while he dries his hair first, closing his eyes and then feeling the awkward silence around him. He knew that his subjects were part scared of him and respecting him because he has shown them a sample of his rage.

"S-Sorry sir, we won't fail you and keep on searching for the princess." The subject continued another, lowering his head and then spoke also. "On the other hand, lord Nagumo has arrived and requests for you."

"Kaoru?" he asks in a small tone as he finished drying himself and then stepped out of the water, wiping his body while his back faces, having the large black tattoo of a dragon seen oblivious in par with his fair skin complexion. "I seeâ€œ!" he noted and wrapped the thing plus his robe to cover up, walking definite and quiet.

The subject continued to bow before he leaves. "He seems to have important discussions with you."

Iyori noticed that and moved his hand minimal, signaling him to get out of his way and continue with the work, while he opens the door and leaves his bathroom, still holding the flower that had disturbed him on his small nap. He didn't consider it a threat but it was best if he brought it along with him.

\_ "Looks like I disturbed your bath." \_

He blinked his teal blue eyes little, to recognize much the voice and the stature of the person. He looked around still on his robe and didn't mind him, casually used that he would randomly pop on to places just like a leech. "You don't have manners." He would always

say that as a formal greeting, and acknowledged the normal yet royal blood demon on his presence. It has something to do with their etiquette as of the kind.

The other oni smirked and retained his place for minutes before he moves and started to stand firm, obviously shorter than the prince who went to look for clothes as new change. "Is that how you really greet me, Iyori?" he questions, him on a gentle manner while having a sword on the side and then an appearance much of a female. He looks so pretty one cannot recognize that he's a male in disguise, for he looked like a Geisha from an expensive brothel.

"Dressing like that practically sickens me too." He responds back towards him and has a sharp look. "I am not in the mood to joke around, Kaoru."

Kaoru shrugged to that partial and knew best not to anger the demon prince before him, because he had witnessed his wrath since then, when they were hiding and all. "Fine if you say so, and I assume that the counsel is the reason why you're on a sour mode?" he added with his normal voice and received a notorious look from him while he doesn't bother watching the demon prince wearing his clothes. "I pity you looking for a girl who doesn't really like you, but you are desperate on looking for her."

"She's mine." Iyori stressed as he ties his obi nice and glanced back at him natural. "I don't share and give what's rightfully mine."

"I do get that, but I wonder what do you see on Shirabukiâ€|" he dared question as he knew that he would walk farther and open another door, sliding it with his hands and his kimono not blocking the way. He gently went out as the prince followed, leading them next to another room while they walk in silence, until they reached the door of the open garden within the Tenshi's main castle. "There are other young women who fit you and have been trying to seduce your attention but you ignore them." He added, as a follow-up with his first sentence.

The prince didn't answer that for seconds, but leaned in front of his favorite Sakura tree which he grows on his own and took his time, watching the wind quietly touching the petals and letting it create a shower beneath the two royal blood demons. "I don't need plenty of women." He said, making Kaoru look at him. "Aka is already worth the women who come to me and I only give my attention to something I like." His answer was made reasonable.

"Akaâ€| is annoying."

"Repeat that and I'll kill you."

The Nagumo lord smirked to that a little and had memorized him. "Saying that to me many times won't work on me, Iyori. It's not like we've been close for more than yearsâ€| ever since." He completely remembered how much the two were close and that he outsmarts his reasoning so far so he doesn't get killed, making him wear the same smile. Iyori would usually ignore to that, but he had spared the Nagumo lord for many times already and they were quite in good terms instead of him and Kazama. "Give yourself some pride, will you? Don't lower yourself over a woman who has been missing."

Iyori had another bad mood to that, but his response towards him is still monotone. "Aka is a princess of a higher rank, and the clan does as the promise for more than generations. She's the only one suitable as my wife." He added another, hoping that there won't be any more of the reasons and such as he closed his eyes, still listening to the flow of the wind.

"This is the exchange for protecting the two remaining Shirabuki clan members, you are saying? It sounds ridiculous."

"â€œ! You are getting to my nerves."

Kaoru didn't mind to that again and continued to find a reason beforehand. One can tell that he's practically concerned as a person who has been close and idolizing him in some sorts, owing also his 'kindness' for not letting him be abused much over the Nagumo family. He suffered a lot instead of having a good life, and was treated badly just because he wasn't a girl. He felt angered with that but was done with it, since he had the power and slaughtered them instead, making the Yukimura clan stand again in secret manners. "I guess its practical obsession, Iyori. Too much of that would actually kill the person." He says.

"I don't care less." Iyori responds making the Nagumo lord give a deadpan look.

\_ 'He's really as selfish and self â€œ centered even if he denies thatâ€œ|'\_ the other thinks but didn't speak of that further and instead, look at him again followed by the eyes seeing the cherry blossoms. "I say it's useless searching for her then if at the end, you only wanted to kill her." He started another and then folded his arms, only to admire the beautiful petals showering still.

The prince didn't argue on that further and was tired to think of whatnot to face on him. Kaoru often outsmarts him with his words and then he just turns speechless, keeping his words to himself.

"Mating is very simple if that's what you want. You can force her bedridden and then imprison her forever."

"I am not after mating. I want her." He said, correcting him since he's not really that kind of man. He looks at the lotus on his hand which he still had held further. His teal eyes narrowed only to remember fragments of memories where he used to smile and then kept distant further because he only trusted one person, and that's the princess. To him, the world was too selfish it only gave one and another to make him understand that the more power he has, the better it is.

"Then I don't see any sufficient reason why you want her badly aside from your obsession which can pass further." Kaoru answered another. "Who knows, she's out there on her own, and there are other humans there specifically warriors who manage to kill her and your search be useless. How many council members are you planning to slaughter and punish whenever they fail to report you back because they're looking for something that isn't existing anymore?"

His cold eyes glared at him. "She's not dead." He started another and stressed that even with his normal tone, avoiding a growl. "Aka's not a normal personâ€œ!"

"Well did you negotiate with Kazama for that?"

He cocked a brow. "I will \_never \_ask that freak." He also said that sickly but false, as if they will never be one when there's missions. Iyori hates him, he hates the prince â€" it was a rival situation and they cannot kill each other for they are both some of the remaining pureblood oni that can save their kind.

Kaoru smiled to that. "Have you forgotten? He's the one who raised your precious princess, along with Shiranui and Amagiriâ€| maybe they are the ones behind that escaped her and you were fooled." He suggested, just to jest his anger more and trigger both so he can sympathize along with the pain he's feeling too.

Somehow, the lord got a point but he accused it false immediately. "It's a crime to steal my bride away and send her to somewhere else. The Kazama clan knows that specifically their leader and I have seen no reason and loophole on how he'd do that." He implied that he had eyes everywhere and he was dominant most in the North. "Kazama won't steal Aka awayâ€| he's a bastard but he wouldn't dare do that."

"Reallyâ€|" the other said with a low snort. "Looks like you're really persistent on searching for this princess, mm? I cannot do anything more about it."

"I need you to add with the search."

"No."

"I'll slaughter you horribly."

"I don't think so." Kaoru said, still not agreeing with him, still on the verge of smiling but thought of another sinister plan. "Well, I can reconsider if you help me with something, since we've been best friends too long, Iyoriâ€|" he said as he proposed more, the prince all ears to his suggestion. "I have been looking for my twin, Yukimura Chizuru; all these years and still had no luck. If you can give me my dear sister, then I will help you search for your wife."

Iyori thought about it blankly. "Chizuru has been gone for too long unlike my wife. This is unfair."

"Then you don't have my approval."

"â€|" for a moment, even the prince wanted to strangle him but then Kaoru had his long blade on his throat, aware part of his actions or most all of his movements even if he was on a kimono. The prince blankly stared at him but on a pause like he didn't mind the blade, but still, losing the life with just the sword is painful and of disgrace.

Kaoru smiled with a practical grin to that, still keeping his beautiful poise. "Heh, like I would give in to that, your majesty. I have lived to look at you while you consider my suffering, so don't count on it~" he said sheepish yet serious, since he was speaking of the truth. "It's a deal as I propose, or else we both know what would happen to us anyway." He added making much sense.

Iyori really didn't like it when he was being outsmarted by a kid, and someone who has been looking at him for times like they were brothers of black trades. "â€œ!" he thought of it for awhile as he closes his eyes and moved away. "I hate you badly." He said in a sneer tone but only had the smile worn on Kaoru after knowing that he agrees, and then simply put to that.

"Very well, Iyori, I shall begin when you give your call." Kaoru confirms withdrawing his sword, leaving the oni prince to agree along.

\_ "Ugh." \_

The bothered oni princess of the South muttered, after knowing that the talk with Kaoru went smooth. "It can't be helped since him and the prince is in good terms since the beginning." She added and said that to herself, but then frowned on the impatience. She has been waiting for them to stop the meeting until the door slid open. The first she sees is the female â€œ" looking lord.

Kaoru smiled while he walked out. "I'm looking forward to the promise, ouji-sama." He said in a casual term, only to recognize the other princess who looked at her with a sour face. "I bid you farewell too, Senhimeâ€œ!" he added, at least acknowledging the presence of the female princess also and along with Kimigiku's presence as the Shinobi guardian. With that, Kaoru simply disappeared out, fading along with the wind.

Iyori followed by, noticing the princess as he gave a blank stare. "I apologize if I let you wait further." He said as he sees her shake her head, allowing her to get inside their area and then followed with due respect, the prince eying at the princess and the Shinobi guardian, still curious on out of the blue, why they were there.

Senhime frowned more looking at Iyori. "Iyori, what are you planning to do? Kaoru is dangerous." She said in some term, warning the male but the prince didn't care further since he really didn't mind Senhime ever since. This made the princess frown more, since she cared a lot for the male. "Whatever it is, it will just lead you to trouble."

"Sen." Iyori started while he gave a sharp look. "What is your business?"

"â€œ!" She was shushed with the voice of the prince, making her pay respect further despite the rank, Kimigiku only there to watch for them and just in case the Tenshi prince would rage mad (which they heard, happens when he snaps randomly). "I'm leaving for awhile, and won't be seeing you and the rest of the council so don't bother searching." This made the person wonder. "Don't ask where, you can trust me as I have trusted you for too long."

"I seeâ€œ!" he responds, answering with truancy but then wondered. "What else are you here for then?"

"What else?" she questioned, making her stand, and the prince cocking a brow in front of her. "Iyori, I can't just stand here and tell you to stop searching for Aka Shirabuki while you offend other oni under

you." she said in a sober tone, but wished that the prince wouldn't actually snap to her words. She just has to let this one out of her head. "It's meaningless and your rage is just killing every one of them including their trust. You've turned in to a monsterâ€| these two years of your anger and ranting on to people who are far innocent." she says another.

He didn't mind to this and remained silent, allowing her to speak but gave a look like he didn't care, making her pissed more and raise a tone. He had received the same complaints and was sick of it thoroughly.

"If you don't mind me, it's alright but take time to look around you. You're not supposed to act like this."

"Sen." He begins while he opens his eyes, rubbing his head for awhile. "You are wasting your time giving me one of those used preaches." He finally told it blunt and of dishonor, since his brows furrowed small to her words, mostly telling her to shut up and stop talking nonsense non â€" verbally which wasn't helping.

"I'm telling you this because I am concernedâ€| concerned of you and the woman itself." She muttered in a hurt tone. "I'm a woman too, and I know how it feels for someone to run away because of your obsession. Give it upâ€| there are others there." She added with a small flush tone, allowing Kimigiku to sit and let her do the talking since this was serious action. "You still have me." She finally said in another truthful manner, nearing the prince and looking at him directly by the eye.

"â€|" it took him some time to get what he should say, knowing that Senhime was feeling like that ever since. In fact, he was sorry that he had to let her suffer that way, but he only had eyes for someone.

"It's fine if you don't like me but when we marry and have children then you will learn to. Don't run after a woman who doesn't value and see you as of how I see you."

He knew that she'd be pushing towards him again this much. He eyed at her again before he held her hand and took it away from him to touch, while he faces the other side for some seconds, only to avoid the face she's giving. "You'll get nothing from me." He has to end it early even if the girl would hate her. He was settled to one thought.  
\_\*\*I only love Aka Shirabuki." \*\*\_ He stressed further with truancy, based on his eyes and his feelings, even if some were mere sadness.

Senhime didn't like the look on his eyes and the feeling of rejection really pierced her badly. It was the first time someone rejected her. She is a pureblood princess and men, both humans and oni were desperate for her, but she got turned down by the person she truly admires. She didn't muster up tears for that and simply let go as he stated, but questioned further. \_"You do? But does she love you?"\_ she added.

Just that simple question made him halt again, flinched for more than seconds while she moves away, wearing a sad face. "You're not only killing her, but you're caging herâ€| I see the reason now why she desperately ran away from you." she noted while he didn't make more

of his answers, holding on to his anger with his fists clenching slowly. "Turning down my offer is the first chance yet I never knew that this would feel painfulâ€|" she muttered to herself.

"â€|" he remained speechless of that, noting that he cannot hurt a girl.

"I wasted my time here then. I shall be leaving." Senhime added further and managed to bow little again, while she faces the other side, looking at Kimigiku and signaled to the leave, walking present and firm out of the room while they disappeared along with the same cherry blossoms following the wind. When they did, the prince was only left.

Iyori took that action offensive but he didn't burst to that. He had his fists clenched on the lotus that he held further and was subconsciously crushing it to manage his temper. He had his alone time too long he remembered the words of the two royal blood oni, but then was really desperate to look for his wife. He values nothing without her, and he has nowhere to lean on without her. He insists on loving her even if he was receiving total rejection.

As he felt back to his senses, recognizing that he had pushed hard and crushed the flower on his hand, he has loosen his grip, just watching the petals of the poor flower blending with the sakura that flows on the path of the wind. \_"Why can't you love me?" \_he questioned to himself in a very soft manner and had his eyes narrowed for a little. \_"Am I not enough for you? You're making a big mistake. I'll have you back before anything else. When that happens, I won't let go. Forever." \_He insisted on that, making it much promising yet the possessiveness stirs deep inside him.

## 10. 00x CHAPTER 9

### \_Shinsengumi Headquartersâ€|\_

Hijikata gave a sour look after the next hours because the Shinsengumi were late for the line up. It took some time before Kondou calms him and the fact that he's annoyed seeing Sannan and the captain let Raion sit beside them means that there weren't manners and that she's allowed to choose where to sit. Little did the female knew that it was of ranking why he was mad, and even if the captain explains it to her she wouldn't mind and understand it.

"â€|" he was really in a pissed mood but then Raion gave it up already, sipping tea gently and sat beside Saito and Chizuru, her original seat, while Okita feels so amused with the tension. Sannan was fidgeting quietly but didn't matter to that proper and finally reunited with their discussions after being allowed to stay with them despite being rasetsu. Today, they are holding a meeting for the troops and patrol within the headquarters, gradually informed that not only the enemies are after them, but the demons that are after Chizuru. There was a moment of queer silence before Kondou would give off a fake cough, so things won't be stiff.

It just turns out that the demon vice â€" captain had a horrible wake up call, thanks to Heisuke who received a hit earlier also.

"We are going to advance further our patrol to the outer city."

Hijikata started as of the cue, making the members wonder including the Squad leaders. "Not only the enemies are we facing and so as the rasetsu, but there's another outer party which shouldn't interfere." He left everyone hanging to that, knowing that the inner group knew what he meant. "Aside from that, we're going to defend other territories after the next few weeks."

"Hijikata-san seems to have a bad mood this morningâ€|" Shinpachi said with a low voice and a yawn, hearing out his words straight as if it was a sermon, and he can feel the others getting the words through the nerves. He was somehow growing sick of this also, specifically when it's a group meeting. Eventually, everyone is hearing him out.

"Who wouldn't not, after Heisuke's loud voiceâ€|" Okita teased in a sly mode making the youngest leader pissed but didn't advance further since he got a good beating from him earlier already. Even so, the brown haired captain looked at the other side like he didn't care, whereas he sees Saito sitting patient and listening the usual manner.

After a long term of 'preaching' and discussion, everyone simply agreed to that and nodded, making the vice-captain end his discussion and moved out afterwards.

Kondou stood up. "Toshi, you don't have to be that angry this morning because of Heisuke and Raion, it's not done with purpose." He only said that to calm down the person, though the Squad Leaders were left together to group and the others returning to their stations like they were ordered further. The system worked that way most of the time.

The demon vice â€" captain gave an upset look still; folding his arms but didn't mind it around. "You have to teach Raion how to listen to someone more, Kondou. He follows but not all the time, and Heisukeâ€|" he muttered giving a sharp look towards the youngest captain around, and didn't proceed on reasoning further, thinking that he'd be just tiring himself.

Sannan spoke to that with a regular smile. "Oya, you'll grow older and older if you think that way, Hijikata-san."

"â€|Sannan, not helping."

"So then sorryâ€| if you wanted me to be general." Raion began, while she makes a small bow, this time, making Hijikata flinch because she did that suddenly. She looks away while scoffing but continued her words, comfortable now that she is wearing a Shinsengumi robe, the same with the rest, confirming that she's a member now, still hiding her gender. "I'm going to keep that in mind that I am annoying and I won't sit with you guys anymore."

"Eh? He didn't say that!" Heisuke protested with a grunt. "Oi you, don't take things seriously and making us feel bad for it!"

"It's not even our fault that you're born an idiot." Shinpachi added along with the tag of the brown haired captain, making Raion protest further.

Chizuru was in the middle again, seeing things out. The setting seems

similar, but it only added Raion on the scene, which she was practically convinced of being the ally. She smiled thoroughly now, Heisuke and her bickering in some words that were eating up the time, just as when Shinpachi joined. If looked at it directly, adding Sanosuke will make them a four combination. She was also glad that Raion wasn't that distant anymore and that she wasn't that shy also.

"They added and now they're noisier than usual." Okita said with a low smirk, seeing the four bicker, and then Chizuru facing him. "Ne, Chizuru-chan, I think you're right after all."

The female thought of that a little for some time before she smiles.  
"Yes, I suppose so."

\_ "Your voices are too loud, don't sour my mood again." \_ This time, Hijikata warned them again, making the four bickering people stop just to notice his voice and his accent. There was an imaginary evil aura wrapping around him and they can feel it, even the head captain and co ª vice ª captain beside him. Good thing he didn't spoke further.

So far, Raion grunted to that but managed to make a small smile out of it. She was getting comfortable little by little staying with them for the past times she has given towards them, and they developed somehow closure. She was giving her ideas crucially and she was backed up with her secret. Until now, Okita and Saito didn't spit her real gender which made her feel lax though the two were still watching her. She watched them too the same thing.

\_ "Hijikata-san, why don't we get a vacation after?" \_

\_ "Vacation? No. The duty is much important." \_

\_ "You're really too stiff on us, it's just one night!" \_

The group were even discussing about vacation. Raion didn't care less about that but was sure that she won't be coming, cautious that her discovery would lead not only to endanger them but part of herself as well. She was supposed to be hidden inside whereas she can be happy, and simply thinking of that made her flinch to a fading view. She was standing still but there crossed a sharp pain on her head, making her widen her eyes and held on her hair with her fingers. She bends little, and squinting her eyes to endure the pain.

Chizuru thoroughly recognized that and hurried to her, who was nearer. "Raion-san, are you okay!?" she asked, but only felt the surge of pain on her head and made her look worried, the group stopping on to her discussion. "Raion-san, what's wrong?" she added another, touching her head but didn't feel fever, though she insisted on helping.

Sanosuke who was nearer also came by to see on her, but then was speechless since he doesn't know much on what was going on.

"Yamazaki-san can fix this up." He said and nodded, now sending Heisuke to call for another one of the aid, but wondered what really happened.

Raion continued to shake a bit, her headache bothering her as she growled of pain, but didn't release an oni voice. She kept on holding

her head for awhile before she primitively blacked out of shock and then went unconscious continuously dropping to Chizuru and Sanosuke who held her. "Oi, Raion!" The voice of Sanosuke said, but then she didn't hear that out.

\_Usually, when demons feel the sharp pain, they are sensing danger. For Aka Shirabuki (or Raion), pain is a signal of something horrible happening, or some nostalgic connection with what she left for more than months, or perhaps years, trying to pull her backâ€|\_

## 11. 00x CHAPTER 10

The view was black, dark and empty.

Before anything else, the unconscious female blinks her red eyes, only to have a slur view of things. She first sees the shade of brown and semi â€" yellow, the background making her slightly dizzy while she sits up with ease, hurrying and knowing that she shouldn't really act on these things much. Because of that, mere trouble is what she caused, plus the commotion. She suddenly remembered that her head was aching because of the sudden sharp pain, but thought not of the negatives. If it was the sign, then she went much to a cautious state.

She had her hands up to her head, still having an aftermath feeling, but didn't last longer. Once she was fully alert, she can hear some voices outside. She guessed that it was the squad leaders, but she worries if she was being rat out eventually. To her safety and fortunately, none about her is being talked for awhile. Instead of having some topics involving her, she can just hear the strategy, voiced by Hijikata but then was thoroughly dismissed. She grunted because she missed most of it, but she can always ask Okita or Saito on the latter part. Even so, discussions are pretty important.

She mumbled to that also, looking at her futon which felt warm yet different from the futon she has inside the palace. The outside world seems to refresh her self even if it has been years going, and she was pretty thankful that she survived until now. Thinking of these things aside, her ears perked little again, hearing of a new discussion, but it wasn't the vice-captain talking. This was followed by the footsteps that seemingly faded, making it harder for her to hear more. Because she is a demon, she cannot avoid hearing other 'elements' of nature in such range and be confused further since she's still feeling the slight dilemma of her headache.

Before she can even inch closer to her door, while wearing her normal kimono and the Shinsengumi robe still, she paused after being interrupted by one of the Squad leaders who slid the door, blinking his eyes seeing her already awake. The others were distant somehow, only lit with the power of one flame that can actually let them see themselves. "â€|" Raion didn't move to that for awhile, as if she froze.

"Oh, you're awake." The male said with a small smile, followed by Chizuru who was somehow behind him. It turns out that the male was Yamazaki who is also known as the Shinsengumi's medic and assassin. They were ordered to check up on her while she's resting and was still hanging on the wonder why she'd have a headache eventually.

The female continued to that. "Good thingâ€| I thought something hurt you." she said, making the female demon look at them both again, still with a puzzled expression. "Raion-san, what was that awhile ago?" she asked another, diverting to the straight to the point question, which the leaders would like to know themselves.

"Chizuru-chanâ€|" Raion started, but had a still 'I-don't-know' face expression. She scanned a bit and then looked at Yamazaki.

"Yamazaki-san, what happenedâ€|?" she muttered with another low stern voice, but didn't actually answer the other female's questioning for she was also confused herself. Silence quivered their minds and so as she, making the blond respond and figured out that she was asked.

"â€| I had a short headache awhile ago, but then it's gone now." She says, making herself much convincing and that she doesn't want to be asked further.

"Are you sure? You look pale."

"Don't matter much about it. I think this happens quite seldom and random." She responded and then started to sit another properly, also standing to prove it not by words, but by actions. Even if she insisted, Yamazaki aided her in standing. "â€|Please don't give me those looks, will you?" she added another with a low sigh, only to have the male ninja give a blank poker face and the other female smile.

Okita danced his way silently. "You are getting weak, or was it because you've been hiding too much stress?" he asked in one of his normal tones, but then he begs to differ if she's going to ask him if they rat her out. "I guess somebody is also like Hijikata-san then, and in terms of having work overload."

Hijikata grunted. "I can manage work most of the time." He stressed but then didn't mind him and looked at the young demon. "Don't faint like that eventually, it's not good." he said, more of a commanding tone though he didn't admit that he's a bit worried of it.

Sanosuke defended to that a bit, but he smiles first. "Looks like teasing quarters won't work on you â€" I don't want to be blamed if you get headaches and faint like thatâ€|" he says seeing her grunt a bit but didn't hold on to that much. He also somehow felt something when he was carrying her with Chizuru's help, but didn't prefer talking to that instead since they're in the middle of a tough discussion.

"And we're not going to catch you next time!" Shinpachi scowled a bit, though he just ruffled his hair and sighed. "Okay, I was a bit mean and I didn't really do that on purpose soâ€|"

\_ "I'm fine." \_

Raion's voice went over so they won't stop that. She sees most of them excluding Sannan, Gensaburou, Itou and Kondou. Her face flushed a bit red but then she stayed put on her place. "You really worry a lot don't you? It'sâ€| amusing." She noted and made up another smile, which she'd rarely show but then become embarrassed after. "Thank you and don't do that again." She added another.

"Heh, you finally smiled in front of everyone." Sanosuke took note, pointing at her mentally and then watched like he wouldn't see this again.

"â€| Shut up." She muttered low, and looked at the side with an ignorant look, but then knew that she was just getting shy another way around.

That little thing even mattered up to now, but what she wanted is to have the case closed before they get in trouble. A member of the Shinsengumi should be confirmed healthy and should avoid sickness. Even if they are known Wolves of Mibu, they still held to their status and position running. One of the things that attracted the female demon towards them is their attitude. She thought of them differently, like people who were of high class though things wouldn't turn out well expected the next times.

Reminding of the sharp pain she felt earlier made her wonder. \_'Is someone from the clan remembering me or planning rather strange with me?' \_she really wonders because there are things highly explained by demon instincts itself and this is one of it. She cannot remember herself hitting hard on the head while she was teased by the three more often. She lifts her hand up to her head again and tried to see if she had bumps but found none.

"What is it?" Chizuru asked again, after seeing her move like that.

"â€| I was looking if I had a wound on the head but none." She responded false yet low and small, however her face turned rather curious. Their looks bothered her a bit. "Anyway what are you doing here crowding in front of me, it's creepyâ€|" she muttered low but didn't lay a pout, since she was fine. "I'm alright and don't even think of me as a child. I am not like that." She assures so she won't bring too much trouble inside the headquarters again. After that small grunt, she places her hand down and then stood again, dusting herself while closing her eyes and first sees Okita while she gives a look. "Souji, I'm not in the mood."

Okita grinned. "You're scary when you wake up but you're acting all cool." He said with a shrug and allowed her to prance. Even so, the first squad captain smirks while he adds. "Butâ€|you're not going anywhere without your swords, right? I think these are pretty important to you." he had them on his hand, both the short and long blades, adding small knives.

"â€|?!" she immediately sees herself unarmed while she faces him to pause. "Oi, give me that back. You're not supposed to mess with my things while I am asleep, that's rude." She muttered with another set of her protest, specifically troubled since the male knew that she's a girl and anytime when he snaps he can mouth out her secret.

"Really? Take it from me then~ I bet you can use your feet and hands barely."

"â€|" she darkened the look. "Are you pushing me really hard now?"

"Yes?" he added and sighed. "For someone like you, I can't imagine

how you would drag these sharp things on your body unnoticeable. How many pockets do you have on your clothes anyway, or do you place it somewhere else?" he added with a sly tease, making him look at her while she refrains from blushing of embarrassment, and still reaching for him. Of course knowing Okita, he wouldn't allow her to have the things.

"â€|" Remembering a part of Amagiri's handwork and his lessons she charged a bit. Knowing that the male would dodge, she immediately slid and hit partial his hip light so he can flinch and drop the sword, which successfully went to her hand. The male didn't expect that, while she stands up and started dusting herself again, the brunette grunting at him. "You think I can't take it away from you? Ha." She muffled with victory, which is one reason why she shouldn't be moving much.

"True I didn't expect thatâ€| from someone like you to hit." Honestly, he squirmed in silence because it did hurt, and remembering that she's a woman, he didn't continue to act on further, paying respect towards her gender.

Raion gave a sickening look towards him again, but then the brunette knew nothing else but not to move too much. She still wondered what the sharp pain was all about, or was it a sign that she's being followed? Her pureblood can sense farther than a normal being, since she was secluded with the demon's scent, and was also used to it. "I don't want to stay here a bit longerâ€|" she mumbled to herself.

"Eh? You were saying?"

"Don't mind me. I want to go out for awhile." Looking at the rest, her slightly blurry eyes caught nothing much of a vision, but rather an irritated view. She didn't mind that also. She wanted to 'breathe' for a little. "If you would allow me, I wish to be alone once moreâ€| I'm alright." She deepened her voice with that again too.

Chizuru got a worried look again. "But Raion-sanâ€| You'reâ€|"

\_ "Bring Saito with you then." \_

Hijikata's words were interrupting, but he has to say that. With a serious yet blank manner, he confirmed it. Crossing his arms like that meant that he was not kidding. In fact, his inept action was just too normal. "You should be back before dinner. It is pretty understandable that you're quite choked at the quarters." By that, he hit through the brunette's mental thinking, probably knowing that she's being strange with unknown reasons.

"Ah? Why Hajime?!" Shinpachi asked again and protested. Seeing the eyes of most everyone, he gulped and then kept cool. "Fine."

"I don't want to come with you anyway, you're annoying." Raion said with a dark tone.

"I never said I wanted to aid you there, even if Hajime would switch places!"

His voice was very irritating, but the brunette just sighed and bowed

her head. She ignored the male and then looked at Hijikata. "Thank you very much." Afterwards that, she decided to stand firm another and then walked, her vision still adjusting despite the fact that she's been there for minutes. She hopes that no one really notices it that much.

When she was gone, Chizuru mumbled. "What is it?" Hijikata suddenly asked.

"Nothingâ€| I'm just worried. I-I shall make everyone tea nowâ€|" she said and then bowed quietly while moving out of the room. "Please excuse me." With that, she fully left the conversation as she walked her feet continuous but slow.

Okita turned his head and then gave a shrug. "Well, so much for this time. I think I should go toâ€"

"Okita, I believe it's your time to go patrol now." Hijikata reminded, making the male flinch with a troubled look. "Don't forget your job here."

"Ah, you're being a mother hen again. I will, don't worry." The brown haired male said with a sigh, about to deploy with the others but paused a little. "Hijikata-san, I have a bad feeling about the others also. Andâ€| Raion isâ€|"

"Hm?"

He was about to tell the truth, but a smile curved up his lips. "â€|cute." He replaced that word which made the vice captain doubt on why he said that, before he danced his way out. That expression of the demon vice captain was just precious he can still remember it. He continued to move away now, leaving the vice captain alone on the room, with Yamazaki.

Hijikata removed the thought and then looked at Yamazaki. "Thank you for the help. Let's go also."

\* \* \*

><p><strong><em>xGan-samax<em>\*\*\*\* says...\*\* Oh my, I am so sorry this was SOOOO late. ;n; from now on the chapters are going so slow since my college work is being nuts and I have little time to do these things... (and I am working on a Black Wolves Saga inspired novelette also for a project at school .) Sorry also for the crappy chapter. It's Saito and Raion's moment on Ch.11~ Once again, I am SO sorry...

End  
file.